

The Tree That Grows Pasta

Practice using *accept* and *except* while learning about hilarious April Fools' Day pranks.

About the Story

Learning Objective: to identify when to use *accept* and *except*

Featured Skill: grammar, usage, and mechanics

Standards:

The article and its suite of support materials support these Common Core Anchor Standards: L.1, L.2

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



Your Teaching Package

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

Video:

- Grammar Hack: *Accept or Except?*

Audio:

- Text-to-speech

Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Accept or Except? Anchor Chart and Practice Activity
- In-Magazine Activity: Interactive Version

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

1. Prepare to Read (1 minute)

Set a Purpose for Reading

- Direct students' attention to the hint box and directions on page 2 or at the top of the digital story page. Read each aloud.

2. Read and Discuss (5 minutes)

- Have students read the four boxes of text independently or with a partner, circling the correct word in each bolded word pair. Optionally, share the interactive version of this article. Then discuss the answers.
- In your Resources tab, find an anchor chart and an additional skill-reinforcement activity called **Accept or Except?** This activity is also available as a Google Slideshow for projecting.

3. Write (2 minutes)

- Have students practice using this grammar skill in context. Project this Exit Ticket prompt on your board for students to respond to on a sticky note before they leave class:

Choose a line from the list below and rewrite it using either *accept* or *except*:

- My team had a hard time dealing with our loss at the soccer tournament, so I tried to remind them that it was all worth it because of how hard we worked and how much fun we had.
- I love all kinds of chocolate, but not white chocolate. I can't even stand the smell!
- Laura is available to meet Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, or Saturday.
- I am so proud of my brother. He applied to go to space camp and he got in!

Killer Smog

How an environmental disaster helped us
breathe easier today

About the Story

Lexile® Measure 900L

For qualitative complexity factors,
go to *Scope Online*.

Learning Objective: to
identify key ideas and details in a
narrative nonfiction article

Featured Skill: key ideas and
details

**Additional skills covered in
this lesson plan:** author's
craft, figurative language,
inference, central ideas and
details

Essential Questions:

- What responsibility do we have for our environment?
- How does human activity affect the environment?
- How can we reduce air pollution?

Standards:

The article and its suite of
support materials support these
Common Core Anchor
Standards: R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5,
R.7, W.2, SL.1, SL.2

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



Your Teaching Package

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

Audio:

- Article read-aloud
- Text-to-speech

Slideshow:

- Vocabulary

Video:

- Behind the Scenes

Differentiated Articles:

- Lower-Lexile version
- Spanish language version

Connected readings from the *Scope* archives:

- Special Collection: Earth
Day Every Day

Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Vocabulary: Definitions
- Video Discussion Questions
- Close-Reading and
Critical-Thinking Questions
- Featured Skill: Key Ideas and
Details
- Choice Board
- **Core Skills Workout:**
Summarizing*, Text Features,
Text Structure*, Text Evidence*,
Nonfiction Elements
- Lesson Plan Slide Deck
- Quiz*

*Available on two levels

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

1. Prepare to Read (20 minutes)

Preview Vocabulary (10 minutes)

- Project the **Vocabulary Slideshow** on your whiteboard. Review the definitions and complete the activity as a class. The audio pronunciations of the words and a read-aloud of the definitions are embedded on the slides. Highlighted words: *industrialized*, *mills*, *respiratory*, *slathered*, *toxins*

Watch a Video (10 minutes)

- Watch the **Behind the Scenes video**, in which author Lauren Tarshis discusses descriptive writing and shares three key writing techniques she used to write “Killer Smog.” Have students respond to the **Video Discussion Questions** (available in your Resources tab) in small groups or pairs.

2. Read and Discuss (45 minutes)

- Invite a volunteer to read the As You Read box on page 5 or at the top of the digital story page.
- Read the article once as a class. (*Differentiation: Share the lower-Lexile version or the Spanish version of the article.*) Optionally, have students listen to the audio read-aloud of the article while they follow along. The **audio read-aloud** is located in the Resources tab in Teacher View and at the top of the story page in Student View.
- Divide students into groups to read the article again and respond to the following **Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions**, also located in the Resources tab.

Close-Reading Questions

(30 minutes)

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

1. **Reread the first three paragraphs. Why might Lauren Tarshis wait until paragraph three to reveal that “this killer cloud was air”?** (author’s craft) *Tarshis likely waits to reveal that the “killer cloud was air” to create suspense and hook the reader’s attention. She also sets the reader up for a surprise; most people do not think of air as dangerous. This surprise draws the reader more deeply into the narrative—they will want to know how air can kill.*
 2. **Tarshis writes, “Black air crept under doors and through keyholes, filling up homes and offices and hospitals.” What literary device is Tarshis using here? What effect does it have?** (figurative language) *Tarshis is using personification to describe the poisonous smog that was present in London in 1952. By using the word “crept,” Tarshis is portraying the smog as a dangerous or sinister person who is sneaking into homes and offices and hospitals, looking to cause harm. The line creates an ominous and frightening mood.*
 3. **Why is air pollution like smog dangerous?** (key ideas and details) *Air pollution is dangerous because it contains toxic chemicals and particulates. Breathing in these toxins can damage the lungs and lead to serious health problems like asthma and pneumonia.*
 4. **Why did the British government do little to reduce air pollution in London before the Great Smog of 1952?** (key ideas and details, inference) *There are several likely reasons the government did little about the smog problem for many years. For one thing, most people didn’t fully understand the serious health consequences of air pollution. Plus, most Londoners could not afford to heat their homes with anything other than coal. In addition, factory owners worried that reducing pollution would be too expensive and could lead to factories closing and people losing their jobs—and the government likely took these concerns seriously.*
 5. **In the section “New Laws for Cleaner Air,” Tarshis writes, “The Great Smog of 1952 changed the way people thought about air pollution.” How does she support this statement?** (central ideas and details) *Tarshis supports this statement with the following details: After the Great Smog of 1952, the British and American governments passed laws to make air cleaner, pollution-producing factories were moved outside London, and the British government began helping residents pay for cleaner heating systems.*
- As a class, discuss the following questions.

Critical-Thinking Questions

(10 minutes)

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

1. **What are some obstacles to reducing air pollution? How can they be overcome?** *Obstacles include: the expense; a lack of awareness about the causes and the dangers; government or industry resistance to regulating pollution; and individuals feeling unable to change their lifestyles. Ways to overcome the obstacles include: governments creating laws to limit pollution further; increasing awareness about the causes and dangers; taking small steps like turning off lights, reducing cars on the road, carpooling when driving is necessary, and planting trees; and re-evaluating our priorities. (Answers will vary.)*
2. **What can we learn from Jesus Mendoza?** *Jesus Mendoza shows us that even though certain problems, like air pollution, can seem very daunting, there are simple things that we can all do to help make a difference, like taking public transportation or planting trees. Jesus also shows the power of community. If one person sets out to plant trees throughout a city, they might not get very far. But by banding together, Jesus and the other members of his volunteer group were able to plant more than 100,000 trees throughout their city of Tucson. When it comes to large-scale environmental problems like pollution, it will not take just one person to solve them; it will take all of us.*

3. Write About It: Key Ideas and Details (45 minutes)

- Have students complete the **Featured Skill Activity: Key Ideas and Details**. This activity prepares them to respond to the writing prompt on page 9 in the printed magazine and at the bottom of the digital story page:

What positive changes came from the Great Smog of 1952? In what ways can we continue to clean up the air today? Answer these questions in a well-organized essay. Use text evidence from the article and sidebars.

- Alternatively, have students choose a task from the **Choice Board**, a menu of culminating tasks. (Our Choice Board options include the writing prompt from the magazine, differentiated versions of the writing prompt, and additional creative ways for students to demonstrate their understanding of a story or article.)

Support for Multilingual Learners

These questions are designed to help students respond to the text at a level that's right for them.

Yes/No Questions

Ask students to demonstrate comprehension with a very simple answer.

1. Is smog dangerous? *Yes, it is.*
2. Before 1952, did people understand smog was dangerous? *No, they didn't.*
3. Was London the only city where air pollution was a problem in the 1900s? *No, it wasn't.*
4. Did the Great Smog of 1952 change the way people thought about air pollution? *Yes, it did.*
5. Did governments take steps to reduce air pollution after the Great Smog? *Yes, they did.*

Either/Or Questions

Encourage students to use language from the question in their answer.

1. Does smog occur naturally or is it caused by human activity? *Smog is caused by human activity.*
2. Did people try to reduce air pollution before 1952, or was it not seen as a problem? *Air pollution was not seen as a problem.*
3. Did the Great Smog of 1952 lead to an increase or a decrease in air pollution in London? *The Great Smog led to a decrease in air pollution in London.*
4. Is air pollution still a problem around the world or has the problem been solved? *Air pollution is still a problem around the world.*
5. Are there things we can do to reduce air pollution, or is it impossible to reduce air pollution? *There are things we can do to reduce air pollution.*

Short-Answer Questions

Challenge students to produce simple answers on their own.

1. Why is smog dangerous? *Smog is dangerous because it contains toxins that can hurt our lungs and cause other health problems.*
2. How did the British government respond to the Great Smog of 1952? *The British government passed laws to make air cleaner, moved pollution-producing factories outside London, and helped residents pay for cleaner heating systems.*

Language Acquisition Springboard: Fill in the five “W” words while reading, then use the answers to generate questions after reading.

Who? (Which person or people is this article mainly about?) *Brian Bone and his family*

What? (What event does this article describe?) *one of the deadliest environmental disasters in history, when poisonous smog swept over London and killed 12,000 people*

When? (At what time did this event occur?) *1952*

Where? (In what place or location did this event take place?) *London, a city in England*

Why? (What was the reason for or cause of this event?) *Pollution from factory smokestacks and home chimneys mixed with the fog that often hung over London, creating a smog filled with toxic chemicals and particulates.*

Connected readings from the *Scope* archives:

- [Special Collection: Earth Day Every Day](#)

The Rise of AI

Should we welcome this new technology—or fear it?

About the Story

Lexile® Measure 920L

For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

Learning Objective: to trace and evaluate two opposing arguments

Featured Skill: analyzing arguments

Standards:

The article and its suite of support materials support these Common Core anchor standards: R.1, R.2, R.4, R.6, R.8, W.1, SL.1, SL.3

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



Your Teaching Package

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

Audio:

- Article read-aloud
- Text-to-speech
- Vocabulary

Video:

- What You Need to Know About AI

Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice
- Argument Terms Glossary
- Scavenger Hunt*
- Essay Kit
- Anchor Chart: Transitions and Argument Essay Checklist
- Persuasive Appeals: Ethos, Pathos, Logos
- Lesson Plan Slide Deck

*Available on two levels

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

1. Prepare to Read (15 minutes)

Preview Vocabulary (10 minutes)

- Project the Google Slides version of **Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice** on your whiteboard. Review the definitions and complete the activity as a class. Highlighted words: *algorithms, marvel, misinformation, potential, skeptical*. Audio pronunciations of the words and a read-aloud of the definitions are embedded on the slides. Optionally, print the PDF version or share the slideshow link directly to your LMS and have students preview the words and complete the activity independently before class.

Watch a Video (5 minutes)

- Show students our “**What You Need to Know About AI**” video to build background knowledge.

2. Read and Discuss (45 minutes)

- For students’ first read, have them follow along as they listen to the **audio read-aloud**, located in the Resources tab in Teacher View and at the top of the story page in Student View.
 - Have students silently reread the article to themselves.
 - Poll the class: “What do you think? Will AI ultimately help us—or hurt us? No matter what you personally think about AI, who do you think makes the better argument: Mikayla or Dave?” Tally the results on the board.
 - Now trace and evaluate the arguments in each essay:
1. **Read the directions in the Scavenger Hunt box on page 12 or at the bottom of the digital story page. If you need to review the bolded academic vocabulary in the box, here are definitions and examples:**
 - **central claim:** the big idea that the author supports in their argument; their position, belief, or viewpoint

Example: School should start later.

- **reasons:** the grounds on which a central claim is based; the individual reasons that support or prove the central claim
Example: Middle school-aged kids need more sleep.
- **supporting evidence:** facts, statistics, and examples that show why a reason should be believed; evidence and reasons support and “hold up” a claim
Example: A study by the Sleep Institute found that 47 percent of kids aren’t getting enough sleep.
- **counterclaim:** an acknowledgment of a concern or disagreement from those with opposing viewpoints
Example: Some may argue that starting school later won’t help kids get more sleep, that they’ll just go to bed later.
- **rebuttal:** an author’s direct response to an opposing viewpoint or claim (the “comeback” to a counterclaim)
Example: Some may argue that starting school later won’t help kids get more sleep, that they’ll just go to bed later. ←[counterclaim] While that may be true in some cases, a 2018 study that looked at two schools in Seattle found that students’ sleep increased an average of 34 minutes each night after start times were moved nearly an hour later. ←[rebuttal]

For more argument terms support, see our **Argument Terms Glossary**, found in the Resource Library at Scope Online.

2. **Project Mikayla’s essay and do a think-aloud that models each step in the Scavenger Hunt.** Students can mark along in their magazines with you, or fill in the **Scavenger Hunt** graphic organizer found at Scope Online. This activity is offered on two levels; the lower-level version has students identify central claims, reasons, and supporting evidence only.

- Identify Mikayla’s **central claim**. (*What does Mikayla think?*)
 - First, ask students: “Based on her essay, how would Mikayla respond to the question in the introduction: Will [AI] ultimately help us—or hurt us?” (Mikayla would say, “AI will ultimately help us.”)
 - Think aloud: “I’m going to circle lines that express this big idea: ‘Artificial intelligence is not something to be feared. It’s a brilliant technology that can make our world—and our daily lives—better.’”
- Underline Mikayla’s **reasons**. (*Why does she think that?*)

- Think aloud: “I just circled Mikayla’s central claim—that is, what Mikayla thinks. Now I’m going to underline her reasons—or *why* she thinks what she thinks. I’m going to underline ‘Fear of technology is nothing new’ and ‘Of course, none of these fears came true.’ Then I’m going to underline ‘... writing, phones, and computers all transformed our world for the better’ and ‘AI will do the same’ and draw a bracket to show that they go together. Finally, I’m going to underline ‘AI can be used in ways that help society too.’”
 - Put check marks on two pieces of **supporting evidence**. (*How does she know?*)
 - Think aloud: “Can I find information Mikayla provides to back up her reasons?” Then draw students’ attention to the following two pieces of evidence: (1) “AI-powered algorithms on TikTok serve us content that we’re interested in. Facial recognition unlocks our phones with a glance. Devices like Alexa tell us the weather when we’re getting ready for school. These are just a few of the AI tools that have made life more convenient” and (2) “Because it can sift through large amounts of data at lightning speed, AI can help doctors detect and diagnose diseases. It can analyze photos and describe objects for people with vision loss. It can help predict natural disasters like hurricanes by quickly analyzing information about past storms.”
 - Star the **counterclaim**. (*What does the other side say?*)
 - Think aloud: “Where does Mikayla acknowledge a concern or concerns from the opposing viewpoint? I’m going to star ‘Still, there are issues with AI that must be addressed. One issue is the potential spread of misinformation by tools like ChatGPT, which sometimes gives false or incomplete information.’”
 - Put a double star next to her **rebuttal**. (*What is her response to the other side?*)
 - Think aloud: “Does Mikayla have a comeback for the viewpoint that there are issues with AI, like the fact that it could spread misinformation? Yes. She says, ‘But concerns like these are already being dealt with through safety guidelines. In fact, seven major tech companies—including OpenAI, Google, and Meta—have agreed to enact AI safety rules’ and ‘One rule that’s been proposed is that content generated by AI must be labeled with a mark or stamp. This could help prevent the spread of misinformation. If AI-generated images must be marked, for example, it will be harder to pass off fake images as real.’”
3. Have students complete the Scavenger Hunt for Dave’s essay. They can work independently or in pairs, optionally using the Scavenger Hunt graphic organizer available at Scope Online. Then share out responses as a class. Sample responses:

- **Central claim:** “AI is a dangerous technology.” (Students may also say: “But the fact that AI can do so many of the things that humans can—and do them well—is nothing to celebrate.”)
- **Reasons:** “The truth is, AI is dangerous because it can make us less smart, spread false information, and take people’s jobs.”
- **Supporting evidence:** “McKinsey Global Institute estimates that 12 million people may need to change jobs by 2030 because of AI,” “The feeling of accomplishment you get when you solve that tough algebra problem or write the perfect introduction for that social studies essay, for example, simply cannot be replaced,” and “AI can be used to generate convincing fake videos and images, as well as articles filled with lies.”
- **Counterclaim:** “Convenience and speed are no doubt valuable when it comes to getting things done.”
- **Rebuttal:** “But what about the sense of pride that comes with doing things for yourself? The feeling of accomplishment you get when you solve that tough algebra problem or write the perfect introduction for that social studies essay, for example, simply cannot be replaced.”
- Discuss: Which evidence do you find most convincing in each essay? Least convincing? What do Mikayla and Dave agree about? Are there any important reasons you think they left out of their arguments? *Answers will vary.*

3. Write About It: What Do You Think? (45 minutes)

- Have students respond to the following questions in writing:

Who makes the stronger argument?

What do you think about whether AI will do more harm than good?

The Strange Case of the Musgrave Ritual

A modern retelling of a classic Sherlock Holmes mystery

About the Story

Lexile® Measure 830L (captions and pairing only)

For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

Learning Objective: to write a diary entry from the point of view of a character in the play

Featured Skill: character

Additional skills covered in this lesson plan: text structure, inference, author's craft

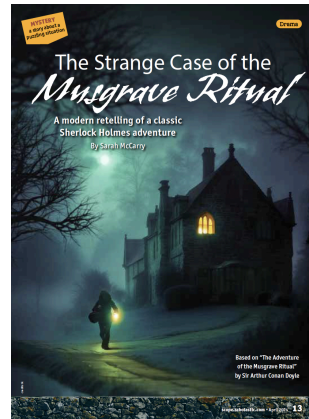
Essential Question:

- Who can we trust in life?
- How are mysteries solved?
- What makes a character memorable?

Standards:

The article and its suite of support materials support these Common Core Anchor Standards: R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, W.2, W.3, SL.1

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



Your Teaching Package

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

Audio:

- Text-to-speech
- Vocabulary

Podcast:

- *Scope It Out! The Sherlock Holmes Challenge*

Connected readings from the Scope archives:

- *Sherlock Holmes and the Midnight Killer*
- *The Mystery of the Stolen Jewel*
- *Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of the Red-Headed League*

Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice
- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions
- Featured Skill: Character
- Choice Board
- Lesson Plan Slide Deck
- Quiz*

*Available on two levels

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

1. Prepare to Read (15 minutes)

Listen to a Podcast (5 minutes)

- Have students listen to *The Sherlock Holmes Challenge* podcast. (You may also want to share the transcript with them. Both are available in your Resources tab.) Then discuss how they did. Did they figure out the mystery? If so, how?

Preview Vocabulary (10 minutes)

- Project the Google Slides version of **Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice** on your whiteboard. Review the definitions and complete the activity as a class. Highlighted words: *bewilderment, deduction, disheveled, forensic, helm, inherit, inquiry*. Audio pronunciations of the words and a read-aloud of the definitions are embedded on the slides. Optionally, print the PDF version or share the slideshow link directly to your LMS and have students preview the words and complete the activity independently before class.

2. Read and Discuss (55 minutes)

- Invite a volunteer to read aloud the As You Read box on page 14 or at the top of the digital story page.
- Assign parts and read the play aloud as a class.
- Divide students into groups to discuss the following **Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions**, which are also located in the Resources tab.

Close-Reading Questions

(25 minutes)

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

1. **What is the purpose of Scene 1?** (text structure) *Dr. Watson provides the audience with background information about Sherlock Holmes and his detective work, which is helpful to those unfamiliar with Arthur Conan Doyle's stories. Holmes makes it clear that the play's mystery took place in the past; which allows audience members/readers to mentally prepare to jump around in*

time. Lastly, Holmes provides the audience with an important piece of information—that “there is one question about the case that remains unanswered.” Audience members will likely keep this in mind throughout the play, trying to figure out for themselves what might remain “unanswered.”

2. **In Scene 2, Holmes correctly identifies Sara based solely on her appearance: “Your clothes are expensive and perfectly tailored. Your shoes are splashed with wet mud. It rained in the countryside but not in London, which tells me you traveled to London this morning. The necklace you’re wearing is old and valuable, and the pendant is the letter ‘M.’ The Musgraves are the nearest wealthy family with a country estate.” What can we infer about Holmes based on this passage?** (inference) *We can infer that Holmes is a brilliant and experienced detective. He instantly figures out who Sara is based solely on her physical appearance. He has incredible observational skills and uses them to make inferences about Sara’s identity. His knowledge of the weather, the value of jewelry and clothes, and the Musgrave family shows that he is well-informed on a variety of topics.*
3. **What is the purpose of the flashbacks in Scene 3?** (author’s craft) *The flashbacks show us the mysterious circumstances under which Robert and Vera disappeared. Additionally, we learn several important details that will have significance later in the play, such as the fact that Robert read the secret family poem.*
4. **In Scene 3, Sara describes Robert as “old-fashioned but loyal” and Vera as “smart and reliable.” Based on the play’s ending, how would you describe Robert and Vera?** (character) *Robert and Vera are conniving and deceitful. They try to take a treasure that does not belong to them, which is illegal. Their crime is especially reprehensible given that Robert has been with Sara’s family for decades. That said, it is Vera, not Robert, who is truly evil; her attempt to kill Robert reveals her villainous, wicked character.*
5. **In Scene 4, Holmes says to Sara, “Robert asked you the same question.” How does Holmes reach this conclusion?** (inference) *Holmes realizes Robert understood that the poem was a treasure map. Robert was asking for the height of the elm because once he knew the height, he could calculate the length of the shadow and figure out where to find the treasure.*
6. **Based on the last line of Scene 7, what can we infer happened to Vera?** (inference) *You can infer that the person behind the screen name “Treasure4Me” is probably Vera—and that she is, as Treasure4Me suggests, doing just fine. She got away with her attempted crimes at the Musgrave estate and is still out there—perhaps committing other crimes.*

“Meet a Real Crime Scientist”

- Read the interview as a class. Optionally, have students listen to the interview being read aloud while they follow along. The **audio read-aloud** is located in the Resources tab in Teacher View and at the top of the story page in Student View.
- As a class, discuss the following **Critical-Thinking Questions**, some of which apply to the play and the interview.

Critical-Thinking Questions

(10 minutes)

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

1. **What skills does Holmes use to solve the case?** *Answers will vary. Students will likely say that Holmes has incredible observational and inference skills. For example, with one quick look, he can figure out a person's identity, personality, and interests. He does this with Sara Musgrave. Students may also note that Holmes excels at solving riddles, which involves analyzing information, using deduction, and thinking logically. He realizes that the family poem is a riddle pointing the way to a treasure; he then quickly solves the riddle, aware that finding the treasure will likely lead him to Robert and Vera.*
2. **Imagine Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was alive today and still writing Sherlock Holmes stories. How might Doyle incorporate modern-day forensic science into the stories?** *Answers will vary. Students might say that Doyle might have Holmes use fingerprints and DNA to solve his cases, or he might have Holmes work with forensic scientists.*

3. Write About It: Character

(45 minutes)

- Have students complete the **Featured Skill Activity: Character**. This activity will prepare them to respond to the writing prompt on page 18 in the printed magazine and at the bottom of the digital story page:

Imagine you are one of the characters involved in the case of the Musgrave Ritual. Write a diary entry as that character, describing the events of the story and your thoughts and feelings.

- Alternatively, have students choose a task from the **Choice Board**, a menu of culminating tasks. Our Choice Board options include the writing prompt from the magazine, differentiated versions of the writing prompt, and additional creative ways for students to demonstrate their understanding of a story or article.

Connected readings from the Scope archives—other read-aloud plays based on Sherlock Holmes adventures:

- [*Sherlock Holmes and the Midnight Killer*](#)
- [*The Mystery of the Stolen Jewel*](#)
- [*Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of the Red-Headed League*](#)

When Dragons Swallowed the Sun

How our understanding of solar eclipses has changed over time

About the Story

Lexile® Measure 810L

For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

Learning Objective: to read a short informational text then craft a constructed response that includes a claim, text evidence, and commentary

Featured Skill: constructed response

Additional skills in this lesson plan: identifying central ideas and details

Standards:

The article and its suite of support materials support these Common Core anchor standards: R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, R.6, W.2

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

Your Teaching Package

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

Audio:

- Article read-aloud
- Text-to-speech
- Vocabulary

Video:

- "What You Need to Know About Solar Eclipses"

Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice
- Short Write Kit
- Core Skills Workout: Central Ideas and Details*
- Quiz*

*Available on two levels

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

1. Prepare to Read (10 minutes)

Watch a Video (5 minutes)

Show students the video “What You Need to Know About Solar Eclipses” to build background knowledge and provide a visual of solar eclipses before students read the article.

Preview Vocabulary (5 minutes)

Project the Google Slides version of **Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice** on your whiteboard. Review the definitions and complete the activity as a class. Highlighted words: *eerie*, *filter*, *nocturnal*, *solar*. Audio pronunciations of the words and a read-aloud of the definitions are embedded on the slides. Optionally, print the PDF version or share the slideshow link directly to your LMS and have students preview the words and complete the activity independently before class.

2. Read and Discuss (20 minutes)

- For students’ first read, have them follow along as they listen to the **audio read-aloud**, located in the Resources tab in Teacher View and at the top of the story page in Student View.
- Have students read the story again.
- Optionally, divide students into groups to complete the **Core Skills Workout: Central Ideas and Details** activity. This graphic organizer asks students to identify the central idea and supporting details of each section of the article and the central idea of the article as a whole. (This activity comes on two levels, with more or less scaffolding.)

3. Write About It

(20 minutes)

Have students complete the **Short Write Kit**. This activity guides students to write a claim, support it with text evidence, and provide commentary in response to the prompt on page 21 in the printed magazine and at the bottom of the digital story page:

How has our understanding of solar eclipses changed over time?
Answer this question in a well-organized paragraph. Use text evidence.

Growing Up on Alcatraz

What was it like to grow up on the notorious prison island?

About the Story

Lexile® Measure 950L

For qualitative complexity factors,
go to Scope Online.

Learning Objective: to
synthesize key ideas from a
nonfiction article, a sidebar, and
two poems

Featured Skill: synthesis

**Additional skills covered in
this lesson plan:** key ideas
and details, figurative language,
compare and contrast, text
structure, perspective, tone,
author's purpose

Essential Questions:

- What makes a place a home?
- What forms our perceptions
of how others live?
- Is there a “correct” way to
view a place?

Standards:

The article and its suite of
support materials support these
Common Core anchor standards:
R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, R.6, R.7,
R.9, W.2, SL.1

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



Your Teaching Package

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

Audio:

- Article and poetry
read-alouds
- Text-to-speech
- Vocabulary

Video:

- Beyond the Story: Escape
From Alcatraz

Differentiated Article:

- Lower-Lexile version

Connected readings from the Scope archives:

- “Escape From Alcatraz”

Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Vocabulary: Definitions and
Practice
- Close-Reading and
Critical-Thinking Questions
- Featured Skill: Synthesis
- Choice Board
- Lesson Plan Slide Deck
- Quiz*

*Available on two levels

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

1. Prepare to Read (20 minutes)

Preview Text Features (10 minutes)

- Give students a few minutes to preview the headlines, subheads, photographs, captions, and map that accompany the article and poems. Project the following questions on your whiteboard and ask students to work in small groups or independently to respond to them.
 - What place will be discussed in the article and poems? Have you heard of this place before? If so, what do you know about it?
 - Why do you think young people are pictured in some of the photos?
 - What do you think will be the difference between the two poems?
 - Based on what you saw in the text features, what do you hope you'll learn in these texts?
- Invite volunteers to share their responses.

Preview Vocabulary (10 minutes)

- Project the Google Slides version of **Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice** on your whiteboard. Review the definitions and complete the activity as a class. Highlighted words: *administrator, conclusive, incarcerated, infamous, interactions, notorious, reassure, uninhabited*. Audio pronunciations of the words and a read-aloud of the definitions are embedded on the slides. Optionally, print the PDF version or share the slideshow link to your LMS and have students preview the words and complete the activity independently before class.

2. Read and Discuss (45 minutes)

“Growing Up on Alcatraz”

- Invite a volunteer to read the As You Read box on page 22 or at the top of the digital story page.
- Read the article once as a class. (*Differentiation: Share the lower-Lexile version of the article.*) Optionally, have students listen to author Talia Cowen read her article aloud

while they follow along. The **audio read-aloud** is located in the Resources tab in Teacher View and at the top of the story page in Student View.

- Divide students into groups to read the article again and respond to the following **Close-Reading Questions**, also located in the Resources tab.

Close-Reading Questions

(25 minutes)

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

1. **Why was Alcatraz turned into a maximum-security prison in 1934? What details show that it was “built to be escape-proof”?** (key ideas and details) *In the 1930s, crime was rising in the United States. The government wanted to reassure people that they were safe, so they created Alcatraz prison as a place for dangerous convicted criminals. There, inmates had to follow strict rules, and they were watched by armed guards 24/7. They had multiple head counts every day. These details show that Alcatraz was “built to be escape-proof.”*
2. **What do you think Jolene Babyak means when she says moving to Alcatraz was like “going from black-and-white to full color”?** (figurative language) *Babyak probably means that compared with Alcatraz, the place she lived before wasn't very interesting or exciting. She had moved from a small, quiet town in Indiana that was far away from the ocean. After she moved to Alcatraz, she found beauty and excitement. She lived close to the sparkling ocean and the exciting city of San Francisco, and there were other kids her age to spend time with.*
3. **How was growing up on Alcatraz similar to growing up in other places in America? How was it different?** (compare and contrast) *Families living on Alcatraz could enjoy ordinary things like ice cream on hot summer days, trick-or-treating on Halloween, and Christmas caroling. But because the kids shared the island with prisoners locked up for committing violent crimes, there were many rules in place to keep everyone safe. Playdates with friends who lived outside of Alcatraz needed to be approved by prison officials. When kids got back to the island from school, they had to go through a metal detector to ensure that they didn't bring with them objects that could be used as weapons. And kids couldn't play with toys that could be mistaken for weapons, so they used bananas and sticks instead.*
4. **How does the section “After the Escape” relate to the opening of the article? How do the newspaper headline and the image of the cells inside Alcatraz add to your understanding of the escape?** (text structure) *The article opens with a description of Babyak waking up to the sound of sirens, indicating that an inmate had escaped. “After the Escape” returns to that moment and explains more about what happened: Frank Morris and brothers John and Clarence Anglin broke out and were never found. The photo showing rows of guarded cells helps you understand how difficult it was to break out of Alcatraz prison. The large headline from the Chicago Daily Tribune suggests that people all over the country followed the news of the prison break.*

5. Based on the sidebar “Life on Alcatraz,” how did the public view the prison island? Why do you think people might have felt this way? (perspective) *The caption “In the News” states, “Americans were fascinated by Alcatraz and loved to read about the prison in newspapers and magazines.” The nation’s most notorious criminals were imprisoned in Alcatraz; people probably wondered what it was like to live near them and whether it was scary. Additionally, people tend to be interested in unusual lifestyles, and living on a prison island is unusual.*

“The Isle of Alcatraz (As Seen From the Outside)” and “The Isle of Alcatraz (As Seen by Those Who Live There)”

- Call on two volunteers to read the poems aloud, one for each poem. Optionally, have students listen to the read-aloud while they follow along. The **audio read-aloud** is located in the Resources tab in Teacher View and at the top of the story page in Student View.
- As a class, discuss the following **Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions**, some of which apply to both the article and the poems.

Close-Reading Questions

(5 minutes)

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

1. What is the tone of “The Isle of Alcatraz (As Seen From the Outside)”? What words and phrases help create this tone? What is the tone of “The Isle of Alcatraz (As Seen by Those Who Live There)”? Find words and phrases that contribute to the tone. (tone) *The tone of the first poem is severe or forbidding. Words and phrases including “a fortress grim,” “forbidden spot,” “scorn,” “fear,” and “fury” help create this tone. The second poem’s tone is warm and inviting. Words and phrases contributing to this tone include “beauty,” “happy voices, children’s laughter,” “cozy,” and “welcomes.”*
2. Read the last line of each stanza in both poems. How are they similar and different? (compare and contrast) *In both poems, the last line of each stanza ends with the phrase “Isle of Alcatraz.” But the words that come before this phrase to describe the island differ greatly between the two poems. In the first poem, the words are mainly negative: “lonely,” “unwelcome,” “grim,” “defiant,” and “unfamed.” In the second poem, they are mainly positive: “welcome,” “beautiful,” “peaceful,” and “dear.” By repeating a similar line with varying descriptive words, the poet makes a direct comparison of the two views of Alcatraz, one from the outside and the other from within.*
3. Read the description of poet Esther Faulk that appears below the poems. What do you think motivated her to write these poems? (author’s purpose) *Faulk lived on Alcatraz for almost 20 years and raised three children there. She likely had fond memories and warm feelings about the island and wanted to let people know that living there was not how many might imagine it. Perhaps she wanted to share an insider’s view, one unknown to most people.*

Critical-Thinking Questions

(5 minutes)

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

1. If you could trade places with Jolene Babyak and spend part of your childhood on Alcatraz, would you? Why or why not? *Answers will vary.*
2. Why do you think the way Jolene and Esther Faulk viewed Alcatraz was different from the way the general public viewed it? *Answers will vary, but students may say that for the general public, the first thing—and maybe the only thing—people thought of when they thought about Alcatraz was a harsh penitentiary and its infamous inmates. For those who lived there, Alcatraz was first and foremost a home—and it was a lovely one, with “sweeping views of the bustling San Francisco Bay,” where “the sun danced and sparkled on the ocean waves.”*

3. Beyond the Story (10 minutes)

- Let students know you are about to show them a short video that has more information about the escape from Alcatraz that is mentioned in the article they just read. Then show the video “Beyond the Story: Escape From Alcatraz.”
- After watching the video, discuss: What do you think happened to the escapees? What stuck with you about Alcatraz after reading the article and poems and watching the video? What questions do you still have about Alcatraz?

4. Write About It: Synthesis (45 minutes)

- Have students complete the **Featured Skill Activity: Synthesis**. This activity prepares them to respond to the writing prompt on page 26 in the printed magazine and at the bottom of the digital story page:

Compare Esther Faulk’s two poems. How is Alcatraz presented in each? Based on Cowen’s article, which view of Alcatraz did Jolene have? Answer both questions in an essay. Use text evidence to support your ideas.

- Alternatively, have students choose a task from the **Choice Board**, a menu of culminating tasks. (Our Choice Board options include the writing prompt from the magazine,

differentiated versions of the writing prompt, and additional creative ways for students to demonstrate their understanding of a story or article.)

Another story about Alcatraz from the Scope archives:

- Nonfiction: [“Escape From Alcatraz”](#)

Don't Break Tradition

A story about family, traditions, and finding joy in difficult times

About the Story

Lexile® Measure 630L

For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

Learning Objective: to analyze the theme in a work of fiction

Featured Skill: theme

Additional skills covered in this lesson plan: inference, interpreting text, character, character motivations

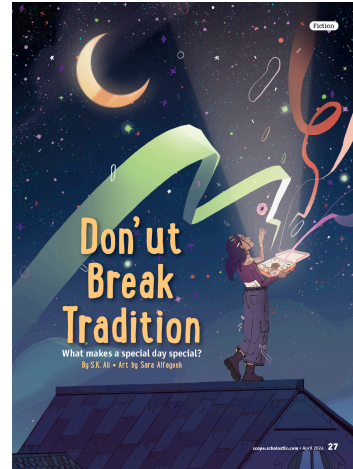
Essential Questions:

- How can a shift in perspective affect how we feel?
- How do our traditions and celebrations help shape who we are?
- What does it mean for something to be “special”?

Standards:

The article and its suite of support materials support these Common Core Anchor Standards: R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, R.6, W.2, SL.1

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



Your Teaching Package

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

Audio:

- Story read-aloud
- Text-to-speech

Slideshow:

- Background Builder: Arabic Terms in “Don’t Break Tradition”

Connected readings

from the Scope archives:

- “How to Make S’Mores”
- “Freddie in the Shade”
- “Ode to Family Photographs”
- “Voilà”

Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Featured Skill: Theme
- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions
- Choice Board
- Lesson Plan Slide Deck
- **Core Skills Workout:** Inference
- Quiz*

*Available on two levels

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Featured Skill

1. Prepare to Read (20 minutes)

Do Now: Journal and Discuss (10 minutes)

- Project the following on your whiteboard for students to respond to in their writing journals or on a sheet of paper:
 - Write a definition of *special* in your own words.
 - Think about a holiday that you celebrate. Create a list of practices or traditions that make that holiday special to you, your family, or your community.
- Invite volunteers to share what they wrote.

Preview Terms (10 minutes)

- “Don’t Break Tradition” includes several terms that are Arabic or rooted in Arabic. To help students understand their meanings, project the **Background Builder Slideshow** on your whiteboard, which includes images and pronunciations. Discuss each term as a class. Included terms: *Eid, Ramadan, Eidi, abaya, hijab, oud, Muslim, Islam, Eid Mubarak*.

2. Read and Discuss (75 minutes)

- Read the “As You Read” box on page 28 or at the top of the digital story page.
- For students’ first read, have them follow along as they listen to author S.K. Ali read her story aloud. The **audio read-aloud** is located in the Resources tab in Teacher View and at the top of the story page in Student View.
- Optionally, have students reread and annotate the story independently. Here are some symbols you might have them use:

! = I’m surprised.

? = This is unfamiliar.

★ = This is important.

💬 = “I wonder . . .” (add comments or questions)

♥ = I love this.

- Divide students into groups to discuss the close-reading questions along with their annotations. (The close-reading questions appear in the margins of the print magazine or by clicking on the bolded words on the digital story page.) If you'd like students to respond in writing, an interactive and printable **Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking activity** is available in your Resources tab.

Close-Reading Questions

(30 minutes)

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

1. **At the beginning of the story, how is Nadia feeling about Eid? Why?** (inference) *At the beginning of the story, Nadia is feeling disappointed about Eid. This is clear from the first line of the story, when she says, "It's Eid, but it doesn't feel like Eid." She contrasts this Eid to Eids past, when she would have been wearing fancy clothes, smelling delicious foods cooking, and listening to lively music. We can infer that this Eid is different from Eids of the past because of her mother's serious illness. Nadia says that "happiness left the house" and refers to staying home to take care of her sleeping mother. The family also seems to have fallen on financial difficulties (likely related to paying for Nadia's mother's care); Nadia reveals that the family had to sell their car and rent out the basement and upstairs of their house.*
2. **What does Nadia do after she leaves the donut shop? What do you learn later about how this connects to Joy's ring?** (inference) *After leaving the donut shop, Nadia goes to Buyway to purchase a turquoise hijab for her mother. Later in the story, Nadia opens the Buyway bag and offers the hijab to her mother, saying, "Do you want your favorite color? Turquoise?" These lines make clear that Nadia bought the hijab at Buyway and that it was the color of Joy's ring that gave Nadia the idea, because turquoise is her mother's favorite color.*
3. **Say Kareem's line out loud. What does the word donut sound like? What is Kareem saying about having donuts on Eid?** (theme) *Donut sounds like do not. Kareem is saying that it's important to stick to the traditions of the holiday because they set it apart from other days. Eating donuts is an example of a special holiday tradition for Nadia and Kareem's family.*
4. **Why might Noor think Mama doesn't need a hijab? What is Mama's "hair situation"?** (inference) *Mama has lost her hair—Nadia refers to her "bare head"—which indicates she has been receiving cancer treatments, which can cause hair to fall out. Because a hijab is meant to cover the hair, Noor might think that her mother does not need one, given that she has no hair to cover.*
5. **What is the it Mama is starting to feel?** (interpreting text) *The it Mama is starting to feel is the special feeling that comes with celebrating Eid. It's what makes the day different from ordinary days.*

6. **How has Nadia started to look at things more in the way her dad looks at them?** (character) *Nadia has started to see things in a more positive way, like her dad does. Whenever something bad happened, "Dad pointed out something good," Nadia says. For example, the family had to sell their car, but rather than complain, Nadia's dad pointed out how lucky they were to have a bus stop right in front of their house. At this point in the story, Nadia explains that her family had to rent out part of their house and fit into a smaller living area, but rather than dwell on the loss of space, Nadia expresses her gratitude to have a wide front porch.*
7. **Why do Joy and Mr. Laidlaw come to Nadia's house?** (character motivations) *Mr. Laidlaw tells Nadia's family that they have come to bring some new Cinnamon Chai donuts, since Nadia had not picked any out earlier. But it's likely they have other motivations as well. Mr. Laidlaw knows that Nadia's mother is ill because Nadia told him so; he probably wants to do something kind for the family. Furthermore, he doesn't have his own family to celebrate with, so he might want to spend time with Nadia's family. Joy seems like she might have a crush on Kareem, so she probably likes having a chance to see him.*
8. **What does Nadia mean when she refers to running toward special days?** (theme) *Nadia means that you can take actions to make a special day special. She has learned that she has the power to create the kind of Eid she wants to celebrate. It seems that in the past, when she was younger and her mother was well, Eid was special without Nadia having to make any particular efforts—probably because her parents were able to uphold traditions that made the day feel special. Now that Nadia is older and has more responsibilities, she realizes that she can do things to make the day feel special, like buying donuts for the family and buying her mother a brightly colored hijab. When Nadia talks about running toward special days, she might also be talking about looking at things in a positive way and embracing the holiday as it is—in other words, focusing on what is good and what she can be grateful for rather than on what is challenging or seems like a loss.*

Critical-Thinking Questions

(20 minutes)

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

1. **In what ways does Nadia change from the beginning of the story to the end?** *At the beginning of the story, Nadia is disappointed that Eid doesn't feel like Eid. In other years, specialness seemed to be baked into the day. The family would wear special clothes, eat delicious food, and decorate the house. Bit by bit, though, Nadia realizes that she can take steps to restore some of the happiness that has "left the house" since her mother became ill. By the end of the story, Nadia is more optimistic and empowered. She sees that she has the power to create the Eid she wants.*
2. **The author includes many sensory details; she describes how things look, smell, taste, and so on. For example, she refers several times to favorite colors, Nadia's being almost-black purple and Mama's being turquoise. What are some other sensory details in**

the story? Why do you think sensory details are important in this story? Other sensory details include references to smells, such as the scents that usually come from the kitchen on Eid, the “deliciousness in the air” at the donut shop, and the perfume of Mama’s oud. Important sights in the story are smiles—Joy’s and Mama’s—which Nadia decides can make a day special. And the sound of Mama’s laughter is “like a door opens for happiness to step back into the house.” Senses are important in this story because it is often through our senses that we experience the specialness of a day. Holidays, in particular, often stand out from other days because of what we eat, how we dress, the music we hear, and so on. The things Nadia craves for Eid mainly have to do with sights, sounds, tastes, and smells.

3. **In what ways do you think Nadia’s experiences are a universal (experienced by everyone) part of growing up? In what ways are they particular to her?** Answers will vary, but students might say that taking on more family responsibilities and helping out more on holidays is a universal experience of growing up. But Nadia has the added burden of caring for an ill mother and coping with the consequences of her mother’s illness.

3. Write Your Paragraph (30 minutes)

- Have students use the **Featured Skill Activity: Theme** to help them respond to the writing prompt on page 31 in the printed magazine and at the bottom of the digital story page:

Over the course of the story, what does Nadia come to realize about what makes a special day special? Answer in a well-organized paragraph. Use text evidence.

- Alternatively, have students choose a task from the **Choice Board**, a menu of culminating tasks. (Our Choice Board options include the writing prompt from the magazine, differentiated versions of the writing prompt, and additional creative ways for students to demonstrate their understanding of a story.)

Support for Multilingual Learners

Language Acquisition Springboard

Practice Reading Italics

Explain that italics are letters that slant to the right and are used in many ways. In this story, they are used in two ways: to emphasize certain words and to express an important thought in the narrator’s head. Practice saying the following lines from the story, reading the italicized words with more emphasis than the rest of the words in that statement as appropriate.

Emphasis:

- It's Eid, but it doesn't *feel* like Eid.
- What makes a day special? What I mean is, what makes a *special* day special?
- Because all of a sudden, I remember something *special*.
- It *almost* smells like Eid.
- I want it to be a surprise, but it was never a surprise *before*.
- They look like they want to see *everything* again.
- Mama needs to know *everything*.
- And when she turns to me, her face tells me it's true—she's starting to feel *it*.
- I have an idea! I'll make *everyone* hot chocolate.

Expressing a thought in the narrator's head:

- *Don't ever break Eid tradition.*
- *I want Mama to get ready for Eid day.*
- *She isn't here to check on me.*
- *Yes, a smile can make a day special.*
- *Enough for everyone!*
- *Special days start when you run toward them.*

Connected readings from the Scope archives

Texts about adjusting to challenging new situations:

- Fiction: ["How to Make S'mores"](#)
- Fiction: ["Freddie in the Shade"](#)

Texts about perspective and the question of what makes something special:

- Poem: ["Ode to Family Photographs"](#)
- Fiction: ["Voilà"](#)

The Rehearsal

Learn about the Latin prefix *extra* through a graphic-novel-style story.

About the Story

Learning Objective: to use Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meanings of words

Featured Skill: vocabulary acquisition

Standards:

The article and its suite of support materials support this Common Core anchor standard: L.4

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



Your Teaching Package

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

Audio:

- Text-to-speech
- Read-aloud

Activity to print, project, or share digitally:

- Root Power: *extra*

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

1. Prepare to Read (2 minutes)

- If students are unfamiliar with graphic novels, preview some basic graphic novel terminology and definitions:
 - **panels:** the square or rectangular boundaries that contain elements of the story
 - **gutters:** the space between panels, where the reader's imagination connects the elements between two panels to create a flowing storyline
 - **balloons:** where spoken or narrated words and sound effects are contained
- Have a volunteer read aloud the directions located beneath the story's title. Then locate the words in **purple** in the story and read them aloud together.

2. Read and Discuss (10 minutes)

- Read the story once through as a class, then have students reread it independently.
- To check comprehension, have students write a quick objective summary of the story on a sticky note.
- Using their knowledge of affixes and roots along with context clues, students can then turn and talk to a partner to discuss their preliminary understanding of the meanings of the words in **purple**.

3. Root Challenge (25 minutes)

- Have students take the **Root Challenge** at the bottom of the page in the printed magazine or at the bottom of the digital story page. Be sure to have digital or print dictionaries handy for students to verify their definitions. Optionally, have students complete this task using the **Root Power activity** found in your Resources tab at Scope Online. It contains a chart for recording definitions, an extra practice activity, and space to record their own *extra*

word, sentences, and illustration. Sample definitions and answers can be found in the **Answer Key**, which can also be found in the Resources tab at Scope Online.