



# SCHOLASTIC SCOPE

THE LANGUAGE ARTS MAGAZINE

TEACHER'S  
GUIDE

with  
read<sup>®</sup>

MARCH 2015

## A COMPLETE TEACHING KIT

ISSUE  
DATE

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

## Let's Hang Out!

As I write this letter, I am still buzzing with excitement from a wonderful video chat I had with the amazing students and teachers at Madras Middle School in Newnan, Georgia. We talked about writing, what makes a good story, and the importance of revision. (Case in point: This issue's cover story went through 12 drafts!)

Connecting with *Scope* readers and teachers gives our team critical insights that help us write our stories and design our activities. That's why I'd love to hang out with you. So if your school is close to New York City, invite me to stop by. Otherwise, let's chat by Skype, Facetime, or phone. I would love to observe you in action. I would also love hearing about your challenges—because YOU are our top priority.

In the meantime, enjoy this fabulous issue. One of my faves? Mack Lewis's wonderful play *The Newsies*. Packed with great dialect (the *Scope* staff cannot stop saying "swipe da papes!"), big ideas about child labor, and compelling characters, the play is challenging, engaging, and important. We've paired it with a nonfiction video that explores life for street kids in the early 1900s. Be sure to check out the lesson that goes with it, starting on page T-10 of this Teacher's Guide. Your students will flex their critical-thinking muscles as they make inferences, analyze character, and build core knowledge about this fascinating era in American history.

Say hi to your students for me!

Kristin



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E-mail me  
anytime!

### DON'T MISS THIS!

We've taken a break from our usual narrative nonfiction to bring you "Your Phone Could Ruin Your Life," a fascinating informational article about the alarming ways our phones are changing our lives. Don't miss the lesson and additional resources online that accompany this timely story.



STEPHEN MITHAN/ALAMY



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# YOUR MARCH ISSUE AT A GLANCE

ARTICLE	SUMMARY	PRIMARY SKILL(S)
<b>Grammar, pp. 2-3</b> “Grammar’s Cave of Daggers”	Students practice using <i>who</i> and <i>whom</i> while reading about an extremely awesome—and extremely dangerous—underground crystal cave in Mexico.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conventions of standard English</li> </ul>
<b>Literary Nonfiction, pp. 4-9</b> “Your Phone Could Ruin Your Life”	Experts are sounding the alarm on smartphone use—and it’s time to stop texting and start listening. Our must-read informational article explores the not-so-good ways smartphones are affecting your students’ lives—and what they can do about it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Featured Skill:</b> Tone and key ideas</li> <li>Author’s craft</li> <li>Central ideas and details</li> </ul>
<b>Paired Texts, pp. 10-13</b> “Toys of Terror” and “Popular Magnets Banned Forever”	Students develop an argument about product regulation after reading a startling informational text about dangerous toys and the role of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, as well as an essay on the recall of Buckyballs, a magnetic desk toy intended for adults.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Featured Skill:</b> Developing an argument</li> <li>Literary device</li> <li>Interpreting text</li> <li>Inference</li> <li>Tone</li> </ul>
<b>Drama, pp. 14-19</b> <i>The Newsies</i>	Your students will have a blast with our exciting play inspired by the 1899 newsboy strikes in New York City. The play, along with engaging text features and an accompanying nonfiction video, will introduce your students to important concepts including child rights, labor strikes, and economic power.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Featured Skill:</b> Making connections</li> <li>Figurative language</li> <li>Interpreting text</li> <li>Character</li> <li>Inference</li> <li>Character motivation</li> </ul>
<b>Debate, pp. 20-21</b> “Should Josh Become a YouTube Star?”	Josh wants to start his own YouTube cooking series and become famous. His mother thinks he’s too young. Who makes the best argument? Your students decide.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting an argument</li> <li>Central ideas and details</li> </ul>
<b>The Lazy Editor, pp. 22-23</b> “Did Aliens Make That?”	Students correct grammatical errors and revise sloppy writing in a short nonfiction article about the totally bizarre phenomenon of crop circles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conventions of standard English</li> <li>Revision</li> </ul>
<b>Fiction, p. 24-29</b> “The Ghost Bird”	The search is on for the majestic ivory-billed woodpecker in this touching story by Roland Smith. Plus! A short nonfiction article about the man who sought to save the ivorybill from extinction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Featured Skill:</b> Synthesizing</li> <li>Character</li> <li>Inference</li> <li>Figurative language</li> <li>Author’s purpose</li> <li>Foreshadowing</li> <li>Literary device</li> </ul>
<b>You Write It, p. 32</b> “Out of the Flames”	Students turn our interview with 17-year-old Joe Chambers, who saved a police officer’s life by pulling him out of a burning car, into an article.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summarizing</li> <li>Central ideas and details</li> </ul>

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ONLINE RESOURCES ( <a href="http://scope.scholastic.com">scope.scholastic.com</a> )	COMMON CORE ELA ANCHOR STANDARDS*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>PW</b> More practice with <i>who</i> and <i>whom</i></li> </ul>	L.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Audio:</b> Hear the article read aloud</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Close-Reading &amp; Critical-Thinking Questions</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Read, Think, Explain (two levels)</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Vocabulary: Definitions &amp; Practice</li> <li>• <b>IW PW</b> Quiz (two levels)</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Contest Entry Form</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Core Skill: Central Ideas &amp; Details</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Core Skill: Text Evidence (two levels)</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Core Skill: Text Structures</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Core Skill: Tone</li> </ul>	R.1, R.2, R.4, R.6, R.7, R.9, R.10, W.1, W.4, W.7, W.9, SL.1, SL.2, L.4, L.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>PW</b> Developing an Argument</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Close-Reading &amp; Critical-Thinking Questions</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Vocabulary: Definitions &amp; Practice</li> <li>• <b>IW PW</b> Quiz (two levels)</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Contest Entry Form</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Core Skill: Summarizing (two levels)</li> </ul>	R.1, R.4, R.8, R.9, W.1, W.4, W.5, W.7, W.10, SL.1, L.1, L.2, L.3, L.4, L.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Video:</b> In the Time of the Newsies</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Close-Reading &amp; Critical-Thinking Questions</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Video Discussion Questions</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Making Connections</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Vocabulary: Definitions &amp; Practice</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Literary Elements</li> <li>• <b>IW PW</b> Quiz (two levels)</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Contest Entry Form</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Core Skill: Making Inferences</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Core Skill: Mood</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Core Skill: Text Features</li> </ul>	R.1, R.3, R.4, R.7, R.9, R.10, W.2, W.4, W.7, W.9, SL.1, SL.2, L.4, L.5, L.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>PW</b> Essay Kit</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Scavenger Hunt</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Vocabulary: Definitions &amp; Practice</li> </ul>	R.1, R.2, R.6, R.8, R.9, R.10, W.1, W.4, W.7, W.9, SL.1, L.4, L.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>PW</b> Run-on Sentences</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Apostrophes</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Punctuating Essential and Nonessential Elements</li> </ul>	W.5, L.1, L.2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>PW</b> Synthesizing</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Close-Reading &amp; Critical-Thinking Questions</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> DIY Vocabulary</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Literary Elements</li> <li>• <b>IW PW</b> Quiz (two levels)</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Contest Entry Form</li> </ul>	R.1, R.3, R.4, R.6, R.9, W.1, W.4, W.7, SL.1, L.4, L.5, L.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>PW</b> Guide to “You Write It” Activity</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Model Text for “You Write It” Activity</li> <li>• <b>PW</b> Contest Entry Form</li> </ul>	R.1, R.2, R.7, W.2, W.4, W.7, SL.1, L.1, L.2, L.3

\* To find grade-level specific Common Core standards as well as the Texas State Standards, go to Scope Online.

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# Your Phone Could Ruin Your Life

A look at how smartphones are affecting your students' lives—and what they can do about it

**Preview:** Smartphones are bringing down the quality of kids' work, inhibiting their creativity, and leading to serious accidents. We explain the problems and give your students simple (which is not to say easy) steps for living healthier digital lives.

**Learning Objective:** to analyze the tone and key ideas of a work of literary nonfiction while reflecting on how our digital habits affect our culture

**Key Skills:** author's craft, central ideas and details, key ideas, tone



## Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

### 1 Preparing to Read

**Introduce the topic.** (3 minutes)

Ask students how their smartphones affect their lives (or, for those who don't have smartphones, how they think smartphones affect other kids' lives). If needed, prompt students with additional questions: When do you use your phone and what for? How does it make your life easier? Does it have any negative effects?

**Preview vocabulary.**

(5 minutes, activity online)

Project or distribute our **vocabulary definitions** and preview them. Highlighted words: *inciting, jitters, mass-produce, neuroscientist, overtaxed, plummeting, technological*

### 2 Reading the Article

- As a class, read the main article, boxes, and sidebar.
- Let students know that as they discuss the article, they will pay special attention to its tone. Review that tone is an author's attitude toward the subject matter

or toward the reader, conveyed through the author's word choices and the details that he or she includes.

- Discuss the following questions as a class.

#### Close-Reading Questions

(10 minutes, activity sheet online)

▶ **How does author Kristin Lewis draw readers in at the beginning of the article?** (author's craft, tone) *Lewis opens by describing three serious accidents involving teenagers. This creates drama and makes the reader wonder what caused the accidents. Lewis builds suspense when she names what did not cause the accidents before finally revealing: "It was a smartphone." This she puts on a line by itself, giving it emphasis. Lewis then begins speaking directly to the reader, which draws the reader in further.*

▶ **What is the central idea of the section "A New World"? How does Lewis support this idea?** (central ideas and details) *The central idea is that today's technology has many benefits. It has made our world, as Lewis writes, "more convenient, information-*

rich, and connected” than ever before. Lewis supports this idea by comparing today’s world with the world of 25 years ago, illuminating ways that technology has made life easier and more enjoyable.

► **From which point of view (first, second, or third person) is most of this article written? How does the author’s use of this point of view affect the tone?** (tone) *Most of the article is written in second person. This creates a conversational, intimate tone; it seems like the author is talking to the reader directly.*

► **Summarize how, according to the article, smartphones can be harmful.** (key ideas) *According to the article, smartphones can distract kids and lead to serious accidents; they can interrupt concentration, which leads to mistakes and tasks taking longer to complete; and they can prevent us from ever being bored, which means our minds are never free to wander and be creative.*

► **To tailor something is to make it suitable for a particular purpose or need. How does Lewis tailor this article to her audience?**

**Support your answer with details from the article.** (author’s craft, tone) *Lewis focuses the article on how technology affects kids. She speaks directly to readers and uses examples kids can relate to. For instance, she describes a kid needing to call his or her mom to be picked up from band practice and a kid studying Spanish verbs.*

► **Describe the author’s attitude toward her readers. Support your ideas with details from the article.** (tone) *The author’s tone is concerned, friendly, and understanding. Many of the examples she uses are lighthearted, such as when she describes a kid interrupting his or her studies to take a picture of a cat. She sounds understanding when she explains that chemical reactions in the brain are why it’s so hard to turn off our phones. Also, she includes herself and other adults among those suffering from digital distraction, such as when she writes “The answer lies*

*in how much time most of us (not just young people) are spending staring at screens.”*

## Critical-Thinking Questions

(10 minutes, activity sheet online)

► Lewis writes that it is difficult to predict “whether the benefits of today’s technology will outweigh the harm it causes.” How could the idea of benefits outweighing harm apply to technologies of the past, like the ones mentioned in the section “History of Panic”? *It could be that technologies of the past did cause harm—maybe people’s fears about writing impairing memory, for example, were valid—but those innovations improved our world so greatly that they were worth the harm they caused.*

► **Consider the statement** “Smartphones do more harm than good.” **Would the author agree? Do you?** *Answers to both questions will vary. The author likely disagrees. She makes the point that it’s not the technology that is dangerous—it’s the way we use it. She also lists the many benefits of our new technology.*

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Are advances in technology always good for us?  
.....  
What are we willing to sacrifice for the sake of convenience?

## 3 Skills Focus: Tone and Key Ideas

To go deeper with tone, have students complete the **Core Skill Workout: Tone**. Then break them into groups to discuss the writing prompt on page 9; encourage them to take notes as they talk. Students should then write responses to the prompt individually. Remind them to be conscious of the tone of their writing.

► **MAKE IT REAL.** Ask students to decide whether they want to change their digital habits. Then have each student write either 1) an explanation of how and why he or she plans to change, or 2) an explanation of why he or she does not plan to change. Students should draw on the information in the main article, boxes, and sidebar.



# Differentiation

## For Struggling Readers

Summarize how smartphones are negatively affecting kids and what kids can do to protect themselves. Support your answer with details from the main article, boxes, and sidebar.

## For Advanced Readers

Create a poster, slide show, or video for your school about the hazards of unhealthy phone habits as well as how to change them. Use information from the article, boxes, and sidebar to help you. Remember to keep your audience in mind.

### Complexity Factors

See how these texts will challenge your students.

**Purpose:** The article's primary purpose is to warn readers about the dangers of overusing technology. It also provides information about how tech affects the brain and compares recent technological advances to those of the past.

**Structure:** The article is nonlinear. It presents information in the first-, second- and third-person voices. Text features include boxes with statistics that are not included in the main article.

#### Language Conventionality and Clarity:

- **Vocabulary:** many challenging academic and domain-specific words including *technological*, *inciting*, and *neuroscientist*
- **Figurative Language:** similes, figures of speech, rhetorical questions

**Knowledge Demands:** Includes many references to apps, social media sites, *Candy Crush*, the Hunger Games trilogy

**Lexile:** 1070L

### Literature Connections

Other texts that explore technology's affects.

- *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley
- "Harrison Bergeron" by Kurt Vonnegut
- *Geeks: How Two Lost Boys Rode the Internet Out of Idaho* by Jon Katz

### ONLINE RESOURCES

**AUDIO:** Hear the article read aloud.

#### ACTIVITIES TO PRINT OR PROJECT:

- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions\*
- Vocabulary\*
- Read, Think, Explain: Identifying Nonfiction Elements (two levels)
- Quiz (two levels)
- Contest Entry Form
- Core Skill: Tone\*
- Core Skill: Text Evidence (two levels)
- Core Skill: Text Structures
- Core Skill: Central Ideas and Details

\*Supports the lesson plan

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# Toys of Terror

Our fascinating texts about harmful toys sold in the U.S. will inspire spirited discussion in your classroom

**Preview:** “Toys of Terror,” an article about harmful toys and the role of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, is paired with an essay on the recall of Buckyballs, a stress-relieving toy intended for adults.

**Learning Objective:** to integrate information from two challenging texts to develop an argument

**Key Skills:** literary device, interpreting text, inference, tone, developing an argument



## Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

### 1 Preparing to Read

Preview vocabulary.

(3 minutes, activity sheet online)

Distribute or project our vocabulary definitions for students to refer to while they read. Highlighted words: *countered, defect, detect, manufactured, prominent, recalled, regulations, retailers, standards, stringent*

### 2 Reading and Discussing

(45 minutes, activity sheets online)

• Ask students to read “Toys of Terror” in small groups. Have them stay in their groups to discuss the following close-reading questions.

#### Close-Reading Questions

Find examples of irony in the description of toys on the first page of the article. Why do you think the author uses irony? (literary device) Words like “dolls,” “yo-yos,” and “trucks” usually conjure positive images, but they are surprisingly negative in the subheading text “Poisonous dolls. Strangling yo-yos.

Toxic trucks.” The author describes My Sweet Baby Cuddle Care as “just about the cutest thing,” and follows with the information that the doll caused “burned and blistered fingers.” This is an ironic outcome for something meant to be fun. By using irony, the author surprises the reader and draws attention to a possibly unfamiliar problem.

The author uses the word *stringent* to describe the safety guidelines for toys sold in the United States. Why is this an appropriate description? (interpreting text) As author Lauren Tarshis describes, the guidelines are strict and precise, requiring testing of the substances used to create toys, their noise level, and the presence of sharp edges or small parts that could be harmful to children. Toys made for children younger than 12 are also sent to a toy-testing laboratory.

Why does the government need an agency—the CPSC—to enforce toy-safety laws? What does the existence of this agency suggest about how the government sees its role in protecting children?

(inference) As Tarshis explains, there are “lots and lots of toys to keep track of.” With thousands of toys sold annually and with as many as 257,000 children needing medical attention because of toy-related injuries, overseeing toy safety is a big job. The existence of the CPSC suggests that the government sees keeping children safe as part of its responsibility.

▶ **According to the article, why might criticism of the Consumer Product Safety Commission for injuries caused by toys be unfair?** (inference) *While many injuries occur each year, the U.S. is known for having some of the toughest toy-safety standards in the world, according to Tarshis. Yet the enormous number of toys being manufactured, 80 percent of which are made in China, makes it hard for the CPSC to detect every problem. In addition, many kids are injured because of how they use toys rather than because of a defect in the toys.*

• As a class, read Kristin Lewis’s “Popular Magnets Banned Forever.” Pause to review any hard words or phrases. Then discuss the following questions.

### Close-Reading Questions

▶ **What words does Kristin Lewis use to describe injuries caused by Buckyballs? What tone do these words evoke? What is the effect of this tone on the reader?** (tone) *Lewis compares injuries caused by Buckyballs to “gunshot wounds” that are “deadly” and, among other horrors, rip “right through intestinal walls.” These descriptions create a tone of dire warning by creating images that help the reader understand the seriousness of injuries that can be caused by this product.*

▶ **Why did Maxfield & Oberton, the maker of Buckyballs, refuse to issue a recall even though children were injured? Why did their fans protest the recall?** (inference) *The company refused to issue a recall because Buckyballs came with “prominent labels warning to keep the magnets away from kids.”*

*You can infer that the company believed the injuries were a result of improper use of the product, not because of something wrong with the product itself. Fans likely enjoyed Buckyballs and thought that adult consumers shouldn’t be deprived because other people irresponsibly let children play with an adult product.*

### Critical-Thinking Questions

▶ **Drawing on both articles, what can you conclude about the effectiveness of the Consumer Product Safety Commission? Is the organization doing enough to protect kids? Why or why not?** *Both articles acknowledge that the CPSC is working hard to protect children from dangerous products. In “Toys of Terror,” Tarshis explains the strict guidelines the CPSC has for toy manufacturers and its role in recalling harmful toys. In the essay on Buckyballs, Lewis explains how the CPSC convinced retailers to stop selling the product, thus putting Maxfield & Oberton out of business. Yet, as both articles imply, the CPSC does not catch every potentially injurious toy and many children are injured by toys each year.*

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What is the purpose of regulation?  
.....

How far should the government go to protect people?

▶ **When, if ever, might regulation be unjust? Explain using evidence from both articles.** *Answers will vary. Both articles suggest arguments against establishing stricter CPSC regulation. In “Toys of Terror,” Tarshis suggests that many children are injured because of how they use toys rather than because of a flaw in the toys. Lewis includes the argument that every Buckyballs package had a prominent label warning owners to keep the product away from children. Perhaps it is unjust to put toy companies and fans at the mercy of irresponsible owners.*

## 3 Skill Focus: Developing an Argument

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

Distribute **Developing an Argument** for students to complete independently. It will prepare them to respond to the writing prompt on page 13.



# Differentiation

## For Struggling Readers

In a well-organized paragraph, explain at least one benefit and one drawback of more strictly regulating toys. Include information from both articles.

## For Advanced Readers

Conduct further research on banning toys. Then answer the following: “What is the role of the Consumer Product Safety Commission? Was the CPSC right to ban Buckyballs?” Support your answer with information from both texts in *Scope* as well as your research.

### Complexity Factors

See how these texts will challenge your students.

**Levels of Meaning/Purpose:** “Toys of Terror” gives information about the harm that defective toys can do and the laws that aim to prevent such harm. “Popular Magnets Banned Forever” describes the events surrounding one particular product recall.

**Structure:** Both texts include cause-and-effect structures.

**Language Conventionality and Clarity:**

- **Vocabulary:** higher academic and domain-specific vocabulary (e.g., *defect, recalled, stringent, regulations, countered*)
- **Figurative language:** rhetorical questions (“Or were they?”), onomatopoeia (“vrooms”)

**Knowledge Demands:** The texts make reference to Hello Kitty, Brookstone, and several other brands and retailers. Familiarity with these references will aid comprehension.

**Lexile:** 1080L (combined)

### Literature Connections

Other texts that explore the role of government in our lives:

- *The Giver* by Lois Lowry
- *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* by J.K. Rowling
- *FDR’s Alphabet Soup: New Deal America* by Tonya Bolden

### ONLINE RESOURCES

#### ACTIVITIES TO PRINT OR PROJECT:

- Developing an Argument\*
- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions\*
- Vocabulary\*
- Quiz (two levels)
- Contest Entry Form
- Core Skill: Summarizing (two levels)

\*Supports the lesson plan

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# The Newsies

## How a group of kids fought for their rights

**Preview:** This exciting play is a fictionalized version of the 1899 newsboys’ strike in New York City. The story introduces the concepts of children’s rights, labor strikes, and economic power.

**Learning Objective:** to make connections between the events in the play and a quote by ACLU co-founder Roger Baldwin about how rights are won

**Key Skills:** inference, figurative language, interpreting text, character, character motivation, making connections



## Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

### 1 Preparing to Read

Watch the video.

(15 minutes, activity online)

- Distribute or project our **Video Discussion Questions**, and read them with students.
- Watch the video about what life was like for poor street kids at the turn of the century.
- Have students work in pairs to answer the questions. Briefly discuss their answers as a class.

#### Introduce a key idea.

As a class, discuss the meaning of *rights*. Ask: What is a right? What are some of your rights? (A right is something to which a person has a just claim. If you have the *legal* right to something, it means the law says that you must have that thing. For example, in the U.S., adults have the legal right to vote. However, there can be laws that violate rights that, in many societies, at least, are believed to be fundamental: due to every human being simply because he or she is a human being—the right to life, to dignity, to free speech, etc.)

#### Preview vocabulary.

(5 minutes, activity online)

Distribute or project our vocabulary definitions for students to refer to while they read. Highlighted words: *labor, leaflet, picket line, protesters, rights, scabs, strike*

### 2 Reading the Play

(30 minutes, activity sheets online)

- Invite a volunteer to read aloud the “As You Read” box on page 15.
- Assign parts and read the play aloud as a class.  
Note: The newsies’ lines include dialect (non-standard English). We recommend that you assign the parts of the newsies to more-confident readers.
- Be sure to read the photo captions on pages 16–19 as well, which provide context for the play’s setting.
- Have students discuss the following in groups:

#### Close-Reading Questions

**In Scene 1, why are the newsies throwing newspapers into the river?** (inference) *We can infer*

that the newsies are throwing newspapers in the river to express their anger. They are sending a message to publishers William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer that no one is going to sell newspapers until Hearst and Pulitzer change their policies. Throwing the newspapers in the river is a way for the newsies to say, “If you want to take away our money, we’ll throw away yours!”

▶ **In Scene 1, Narrator 3 says, “Newsies swarm the wagon like ants on a frankfurter.” What idea does this simile convey?** (figurative language) *The phrase creates an image of many kids moving quickly with great enthusiasm. It helps the reader imagine the number of newsies as well as their unstoppable determination.*

▶ **At the end of Scene 3, when Ani says she won’t cheat anyone, Chubbs answers, “Just you wait till it’s pourin’ rain and the only thing in the news is a cat up a tree.” What does he mean?** (interpreting text) *Chubbs is saying that Ani’s code of ethics may break down when there’s nothing big in the news to attract customers—when newspaper sales slow down and she becomes desperate.*

▶ **In Scene 4, after Ani fails to give the stockbroker his change, why does she hang her head?** (character) *Hanging one’s head is an expression of shame. Ani is ashamed of what she has done. Chubbs’s prediction that Ani would compromise her values when times got really tough was right.*

▶ **In Scene 7, Hearst offers two dollars a day to anyone who crosses the picket line. Why does he make this offer?** (character motivation) *To “cross the picket line” means to work during the strike. Hearst hopes that the money will convince some kids to break the strike and destroy the newsies’ morale.*

### Critical-Thinking Questions

▶ **In the opening scene, newsies have blocked traffic on a bridge and thrown a wagon of newspapers into the river. The scene is cut short, then resumed**

**at the end of the play. How does this structure affect the experience of reading the play?** *By opening with such a dramatic scene and leaving some questions unanswered, the writer captures our interest and draws us into the story.*

▶ **Imagine that you are one of the newsies, and the strike has just been proposed. What fears would you have about the strike? What reasons would you have to support it?** *Answers will vary. Students might say that they’d worry about starving during the strike or losing their jobs. They might support the strike because the would-be-strikers’ demands are fair, because the strike would only work if everyone participated, and because the strike seemed to be the only way for the newsies to be heard.*

▶ **In the epilogue, we learn what happens to the newsies. Did their strike ultimately make a difference?** *Yes; their strike won them a better agreement with their employers. Although their lives were probably not much easier, the strike showed the newsies and the world how powerful people can be when they are united. Ani states in the epilogue that the newsies bravely “helped pave the way” for future child-labor laws.*

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What is the difference between a right and a privilege?  
.....  
Should kids have jobs?  
.....  
What defines our rights?

## 3 Skill Building: Making Connections

(8 minutes, activity sheet online)

Have students complete the activity **Making Connections** in groups. This will prepare them to respond to the writing prompt on page 19.

**GO DEEPER!** Break students into groups to research child labor in the world today and choose one region to focus on. Each group should then create a class presentation explaining why kids in this region must work, how it affects their lives, and what could be/is being done to help them.

# Differentiation

## For Struggling Readers

What did the newsies accomplish through their strike? Did they achieve their main goal? Answer both questions in a well-organized paragraph. Use text evidence to support your ideas.

## For Advanced Readers

Research the newsboy strikes that took place around the turn of the 20th century. Then write an essay comparing the real strikes to how a strike is portrayed in the play.

### Complexity Factors

See how these texts will challenge your students.

**Levels of Meaning/Purpose:** This fictionalized account of the 1899 newsboy strike examines issues related to child labor, civil rights, and economic power.

**Structure:** The play is mainly chronological but begins with a preview of the thrilling final scene and concludes with a past-tense epilogue that includes information beyond the setting of the play.

**Language Conventionalty and Clarity:**

- **Vocabulary:** many higher academic words (*circulation, strike, forlorn*) as well as slang specific to the play's setting
- **Figurative Language:** similes ("swarm the wagon like ants on a frankfurter"), metaphors, rhetorical questions

**Knowledge Demands:** Knowledge of protests, labor strikes, and child labor will aid comprehension.

**Lexile:** not applicable

### Literature Connections

Other texts related to child labor:

- *The Circuit* by Francisco Jiménez
- *Uprising* by Margaret Peterson Haddix
- *Lyddie* by Katherine Paterson

### ONLINE RESOURCES

**VIDEO:** In the Time of the Newsies

**ACTIVITIES TO PRINT OR PROJECT:**

- Video Discussion Questions\*
- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions\*
- Vocabulary\*
- Making Connections\*
- Literary Elements
- Quiz (two levels)
- Contest Entry Form
- Core Skill: Making Inferences
- Core Skill: Mood
- Core Skill: Text Features

\*Supports the lesson plan

# The Ghost Bird

The search is on for the majestic ivory-billed woodpecker.

**Preview:** Roland Smith's touching story about a girl who helps her elderly neighbor search for a supposedly extinct bird is paired with a short nonfiction text about the real person who inspired Smith's story.

**Learning Objectives:** to synthesize information from fiction and nonfiction texts

**Key Skills:** character, inference, figurative language, author's purpose, foreshadowing, literary device, synthesizing



## Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

### 1 Preparing to Read

**Preview text and questions. (5 minutes)**

- Give students a few minutes to look through the story. Direct their attention to the nonfiction pairing on page 29. After students have scanned both texts, ask students what they think the fiction and the nonfiction text might have in common.
- Have students independently preview the close-reading questions written in the margins.

**Set a purpose for reading. (5 minutes)**

Read the “As You Read” box on page 24. Ask students to suggest why the short story might be paired with a nonfiction text.

### 2 Reading the Story

**Read, discuss, mark. (25 minutes)**

- Read “The Ghost Bird” once as a class.
- Break students into groups to read the story again, pausing to discuss the close-reading questions in the margins. Then have each student write answers

independently in the margins.

- Have each group come up with one more close-reading question to discuss with the whole class.

#### Answers to Close-Reading Questions

**Character** (p. 25) *Mr. Tanner is an elderly man who lives alone and loves birds. Many of his neighbors seem to dislike him and think he's crazy because of the hundreds of birdhouses on his property. He avoids attention, generally preferring to keep to himself.*

**Inference** (p. 25) *You can infer from his binoculars that the driver is an outdoor enthusiast, perhaps a birdwatcher.*

**Figurative language** (p. 26) *The simile shows that Mr. Tanner views the strangers as greedy scavengers, there to profit from his comments rather than to help him or the birds.*

**Author's purpose** (p. 26) *By having Mr. Tanner describe these details, the author accomplishes two things: He provides readers with information about*



two different kinds of birds, and he demonstrates that Mr. Tanner knows what he's talking about—he's not a crazy old man at all.

► **Foreshadowing** (p. 27) *At the end of the story, the beetles help Mr. Tanner locate the ivory-billed woodpeckers; the birds have entered his attic to eat the beetles.*

► **Character** (p. 27) *Martin has realized that Hannah knows a lot about birds, and he respects her knowledge. He no longer behaves like a know-it-all who challenges everything she says.*

► **Inference** (p. 28) *Hannah is rushing because she's afraid that something is wrong. Mr. Tanner is elderly, she's never known him to climb the stairs before, and he speaks to her "in a weak voice." You can infer that Hannah is worried.*

► **Literary device** (p. 28) *The author is using onomatopoeia to show the reader exactly what Hannah hears. This literary device creates a feeling of suspense because the reader, like Hannah, does not know what's making the noise.*

► **Inference** (p. 28) *Hannah sees a family of ivory-billed woodpeckers. After the end of the story, Mr. Tanner's land will probably be preserved.*

### 3 Reading the Informational Text

(7 minutes, activity sheet online)

Break students up into groups to read the informational text. Then discuss the critical-thinking questions as a class.

#### Critical-Thinking Questions

► **The ivory-billed woodpecker is also known as the Ghost Bird. What are possible reasons for this nickname?** *The ivory-billed woodpecker is described as "blue-black with white lightning-bolt stripes along*

*its back"* (p. 29). Viewed at night, the bird might have appeared ghostly. Alternately, this nickname evokes the ghost-like quality of sightings of a bird believed by many to be long extinct.

► **Was James Tanner's work successful? Did he make a positive difference for the ivory-billed woodpecker? How can you tell?** *Answers will vary. Students might say that Tanner did not succeed in saving the land where he found the ivorybills and was therefore not successful in his work. Others might point out that, as an author and ivorybill expert, Tanner raised awareness of the ivory-billed woodpecker and alerted people to the possibility of finding a few surviving specimens—and that he made a positive difference for the birds in that way.*

► **Why might someone offer \$50,000 for proof that the ivorybill still exists?** *The author describes the ivorybill as "dazzling" and "one of America's most treasured creatures." In the fiction, Mr. Tanner's comments imply that many birds are losing their habitats as wilderness is developed by humans. It is likely that the anonymous donor would be thrilled to learn that something so beautiful and treasured has not been wiped out. Also, the donor may believe that with proof of the ivorybill's existence, it might be easier to fight for protection of the birds' habitat.*

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What are the causes of extinction?

.....

Why do people dedicate their lives to helping an animal species?

### 4 Skill Building

**Featured Skill: Synthesizing**  
(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

Distribute our activity sheet on **Synthesizing**. This activity will prepare students for the writing prompt on page 29.

**TIP!** One theme that runs through both the story and article is that the search for the ivorybill inspires hope in people. Hold a class discussion about how this idea is shown in both texts. Why might the search for an extinct bird yield hope?

# Differentiation

## For Struggling Readers

Both Mr. Tanner in the fiction and James Tanner in the informational text want to find ivorybills. Are their reasons the same? Explain.

## For Advanced Readers

What reasons might the editors of *Scope* have had for pairing “The Ghost Bird” with the informational text “Saving the Ghost Bird”? How can the informational text enhance a reader’s understanding of the story’s themes?

## Complexity Factors

See how these texts will challenge your students.

**Levels of Meaning/Purpose:** In “The Ghost Bird,” an elderly man and his friends search for birds belonging to a species thought to be extinct. On a deeper level, the story, like its accompanying nonfiction text, provides information on the ivory-billed woodpecker and on environmental conservation.

**Structure:** The story is mainly chronological, with some descriptive and explanatory passages woven throughout.

**Language Conventionality and Clarity:**

- **Vocabulary:** higher academic and domain-specific vocabulary (*daunting, ornithologists, larvae, stifled*)
- **Figurative language:** similes (“perched on his shoulder like a feathered ornament”), figures of speech (“eyes glued to the trees above”), and rhetorical questions (“But was it?”)

**Knowledge Demands:** Some knowledge of issues related to environmental conservation will aid comprehension.

**Lexile:** 810L (fiction); 1110L (informational text)

## Literature Connections

Other texts about nature/conservation:

- *Hoot* by Carl Hiaasen
- “A Minor Bird” by Robert Frost (poem)
- “Conservation as a National Responsibility” by Theodore Roosevelt (speech)

## ONLINE RESOURCES

### ACTIVITIES TO PRINT OR PROJECT:

- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions\*
- Synthesizing\*
- DIY Vocabulary
- Literary Elements
- Quiz (two levels)
- Contest Entry Form

\*Supports the lesson plan

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