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Aligned



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STORYWORKS
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Cover illustration by Susan Farrington

WRITE TO US!

(Name of contest or department)
c/o Storyworks
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New York, NY 10013-0712

Or e-mail contest entries to:
storyworks@scholastic.com

(Please put contest name in subject line.)

Students, remember to include your

- 1) name and age
- 2) teacher's name
- 3) school's name
- 4) school's address
- 5) school's phone number



Gram

These animals look adorable. But don't be fooled—they're very dangerous! Find out more about them as you help Grammar Cop correct some *deadly* capitalization errors.

WHAT TO DO:

1. Read each animal's important rule about capitalization.
2. Use each animal's rule to help you fix the errors in its description.



MY RULE

Capitalize names of places and adjectives made from them—like *America* and *American*.

Slow Loris

This mammal lives in rainforests in India, China, and other Asian countries. It looks sweet and cuddly. But if it's threatened, it'll release a fluid from a gland in its arm. It licks the fluid, which mixes with saliva to make its bite poisonous. Yeesh! You'll want to run to Antarctica!

mar Cop

**CAPITALIZE
WORDS
CORRECTLY**

Polar Bear

Polar bears might seem lovable in books like *the golden compass*. They might wow you in *national geographic*. But in a few years, this cute cub will stand more than 8 feet tall and will have paws as big as your head. Maybe it deserves to be in *guinness world records*.

MY RULE

Capitalize the first, last, and other important words in a title.



MY RULE

The first word inside quotation marks should be capitalized.

Poison Dart Frog

If you see someone about to pet one of these guys, shout, “stay away!” Or, “keep back!” These pretty critters are among Earth’s most toxic. Poison in their skin call kill you with one touch. We say, “yikes!”





Cause and Effect

As you read this article, look for the many effects caused by the eruption of one volcano.

LOOK FOR WORD NERD'S
8 TERMS IN BOLD



The VOLCANO That

Two hundred years ago,
an unknown volcano caused
death and destruction around
the world **BY LAUREN TARSHIS**



CLAYO

Changed the World

Ten-year-old John Hoisington stared in shock out the window of his family's Vermont farmhouse. It was June 8, 1816. Summer was just two weeks away. Yet outside, a wild winter snowstorm was raging.

Nearly a foot of snow covered the fields the family had planted only weeks before. The family's vegetable garden was buried. The apple and pear trees shivered in the freezing wind, their delicate buds coated with ice.

Like most people in 1816, the Hoisingtons grew almost everything they ate. Practically every bite of the family's food came from the farm, from the corn in their morning porridge to the chicken and potatoes in the supper-time stew. John saw the look of fear in his father's eyes as they watched the snow swirling outside. This storm would kill all of their crops. There would be little food for the family or their animals.

How would they survive?

What John and his family didn't know was that during that strange summer of 1816, similar weather disasters were unfolding throughout New England—and the world. Snow destroyed thousands of other East Coast farms, from Virginia up to Maine. Snowstorms and floods struck France, England, Ireland, and Switzerland. There were **droughts** and floods in India and killing frosts across northern China.

At the time, people struggled to understand what had caused the weather to change so wildly. Were witches to blame?

It is only now, nearly 200 years later, that scientists have finally solved the mystery. Very likely John Hoisington and his family would have been astonished to learn the truth: The cause of their family's suffering was an event that took place a year earlier and 10,000 miles away from their farm.

It all started with a volcano called Mount Tambora.

A Ruined Land

Mount Tambora sits on the island of Sumbawa, which today is part of the nation of Indonesia. In 1815, perhaps 50,000 people lived on Sumbawa, a beautiful land of rushing streams, gentle hills, and thick jungles. Looming over the northern side of the island was Mount Tambora, a quiet mountain dotted with villages and rice farms. Nobody had any reason to



Above: Many European painters unknowingly captured Tambora's effects. This painting, by J. M. W. Turner, is of Mount Vesuvius. But experts believe that the color of the sky was inspired by what Turner must have seen over England in the years after Tambora's eruption.



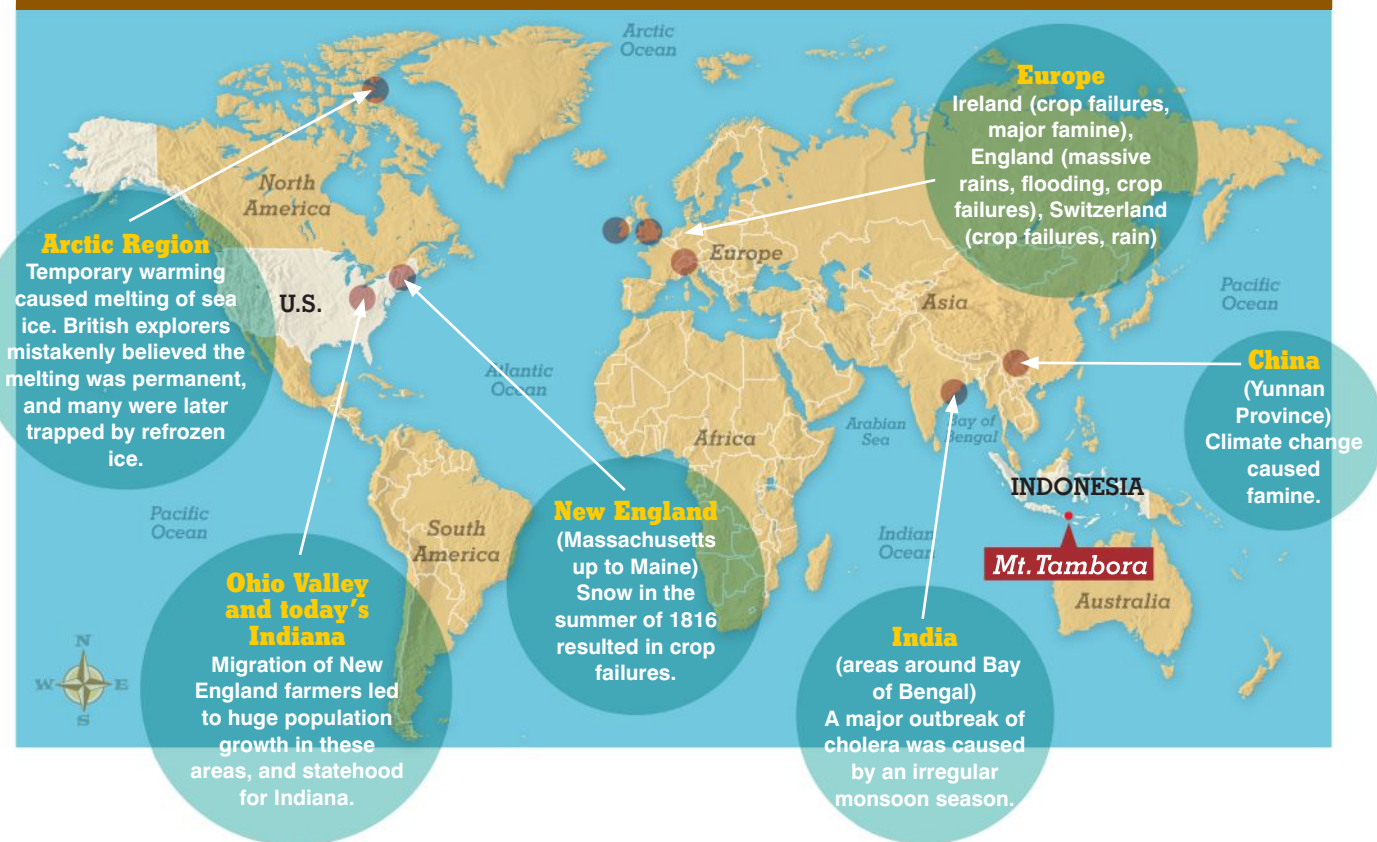
The book *Frankenstein* was partly inspired by Tambora. Author Mary Shelley (above) wrote the novel in stormy Switzerland during the endless gloom of the summer of 1816.



MOUNT VESUVIUS IN ERUPTION, 1817 (W.C. ON PAPER), TURNER, JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM (1775-1851), YALE CENTER FOR BRITISH ART, PAUL MELLON COLLECTION, USA / THE BRUGEMAN ART LIBRARY (TOP); DEAGUSTINI/IDEA PICTURE LIBRARY/GETTY IMAGES (BOTTOM LEFT); UNIVERSAL/THE KOBAL COLLECTION (BOTTOM RIGHT)

The Eruption Felt Around the World

From India to the Arctic, Tambora's volcanic cloud caused misery



suspect that the peaceful mountain was in fact a volcano, that underneath its velvety green slopes were snaking tunnels filled with lava and explosive gases. Like many volcanoes, Tambora looked like an ordinary mountain and had been **dormant**—quiet—for centuries. But on April 5, 1815, Tambora woke up.

The first eruption shook the island and sent up great **plumes** of fire and ash. But that was nothing compared with what would come five days later, on April 10.

Kaboom!

The volcano exploded with terrible fury, spewing out great towers of fire. A tremendous cloud of gas and ash shot high into the sky. The day turned midnight black, but the mountain glowed red as rivers of lava gushed down the slopes. The eruption went on for more than three days, a deadly storm of fire, gas, ash, and rock. In the eruption's terrifying final stage,

a wave of flames and gases swept down the mountain at speeds of 400 miles per hour. This **pyroclastic surge** devastated everything in its path.

Ignored and Forgotten

The eruption instantly killed at least 12,000 people living on and around Mount Tambora. Ash and lava ruined the island's soil and poisoned its rivers and streams. Rice paddies were destroyed. No fruits or vegetables would grow. There were no fish to catch; almost every animal had been killed. Trapped without food on their ruined lands, more than 90,000 people on Sumbawa and the nearby island of Lombok slowly starved to death.

The eruption of Tambora in 1815 was the most deadly and powerful volcanic eruption in human history. Its explosive energy was 10 times stronger than that of Krakatoa, history's

Comparing Volcanoes

Scientists measure the power of volcanic eruptions on a scale of 0-8, with 8 being the most powerful and 0 being the least powerful. Here is how some major eruptions rated.

Vesuvius
Italy
79 A.D.

5

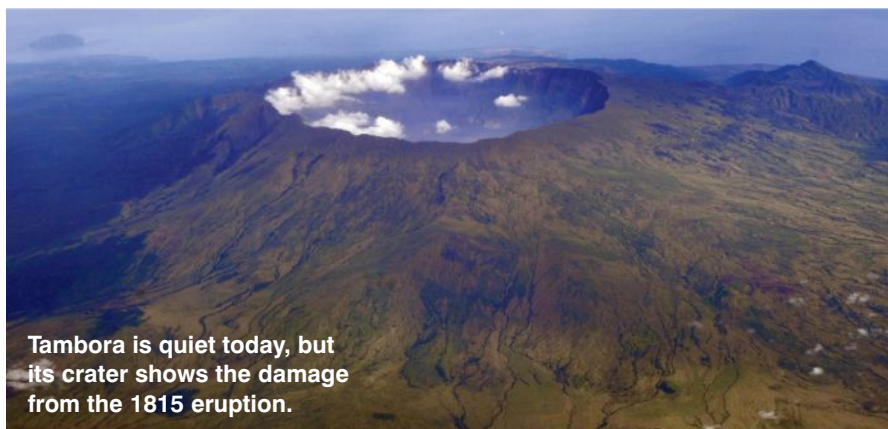
Tambora
Indonesia
1815

7

most famous volcano, which erupted in 1883, also in what is now Indonesia.

And yet, incredibly, few people outside the blast zone learned about this terrible disaster. The people of Sumbawa and surrounding islands led simple lives. Few of them had any connections to far-off lands like Europe or the Americas. Some British sailors witnessed the eruption. But news and information traveled very slowly in 1815. The only way to get a letter (or a person) across oceans was on a sailing ship. The voyage from Sumbawa to New York or London would have taken perhaps four months. Eventually, reports of the eruption did make it back to England, but few people paid attention. Somehow, the deadliest volcano in history was ignored by most of the world—and then forgotten.

What people *were* paying attention to a year later, in 1816, was the terrible weather—snowstorms in the summer, floods that turned wheat fields into lakes, frosts that blackened millions of acres of farmland around the world. Farmers up and down the East Coast lost their crops. In Europe, farmers grew desperate. In Paris, mobs of people broke into warehouses where grain was stored, risking their lives to steal sacks of flour. In China, starving families could no longer feed their children. Floods in India triggered an outbreak of a disease called cholera, which killed millions.



Tambora is quiet today, but its crater shows the damage from the 1815 eruption.

Solving a Mystery

In 1816, not even the most brilliant scientists would have believed that these weather problems were somehow connected—that all these disasters had been caused by the eruption of a volcano few had heard of. Little was known about **climate** or volcanoes. But today, scientists know that volcanoes can have a major impact on weather worldwide. They have learned by studying recent volcanic eruptions, like Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines.

Scientists monitored every phase of Pinatubo's eruption in June 1991. It was not as powerful as Tambora. But the eruption was monstrous, one of the most powerful since Krakatoa.

Using satellites and computers, scientists tracked the volcano's huge eruption cloud as it rose into the sky. Most volcanic clouds quickly **dissipate**—break apart and fade away. But in a very powerful eruption, the cloud rises so high that it mixes with water and other gases in the **stratosphere**. It turns into a foam and remains high in the sky. Scientists observed Pinatubo's

Krakatoa
Indonesia
1883

6

Mt. St. Helens
USA
1980

5

Pinatubo
Philippines
1991

6

Artifacts like these pieces of pottery have been unearthed from the ruins on Tambora's slopes.



cloud as it spread across the world. Like a layer of sunscreen slathered across the sky, the cloud blocked out some of the sun's heat and light. Temperatures dropped, and storms became more violent. It took three years for Pinatubo's foamy haze to clear. Tambora's cloud would have been even bigger, its effects more devastating. Indeed, like an invisible beast, Tambora's cloud hovered in the sky for about three years. By the time the climate returned to normal, as many as 30 million people had died from Tambora's effects.

And many more lives—like the Hoisingtons'—had been forever changed.

John and his family survived the loss of their crops. But they gave up their farm and moved west to Ohio. They started their trek in June 1817, traveling in an oxcart piled with their possessions.

Tens of thousands of other New England farmers made similar journeys, all driven west by the hardships of 1816. It was one of the biggest **migrations** in U.S. history. Most migrants went to Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois.

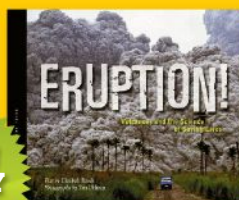
The Hoisingtons' 1,000-mile journey took three months. John's older sister Sabrina recorded the trip in her diary. She described the family's meeting with American Indians, long days of slogging through mud, and some enjoyable visits with friends they met along the way. They arrived in Ohio in August and were soon settled in to life on their new farm.

Meanwhile, 10,000 miles away, the volcano that had nearly destroyed their lives went back to sleep, sitting in silence to this day—until it wakes again. 🌋

WRITE TO WIN

Imagine you could send a letter through time, explaining to the Hoisingtons what caused the strange weather of 1816. In your letter, tell them how Tambora affected people around the world. Send it to "Tambora Contest" by October 15. Ten winners will each receive a copy of *Eruption!* by Elizabeth Rusch. See page 2 for details.

**FIND AN
ACTIVITY
ONLINE!**



How one
boy copes
with
stuttering—
and steals
the show

BY JANE BIANCHI

Talen's Got Talent



Synthesizing As you read these articles, look for details about what can make speech difficult—and what makes it easier.

LOOK FOR WORD NERD'S 7 WORDS IN BOLD



Ten-year-old Talen struts onto a stage in a white button-down shirt and black blazer to the beat of the soul song “Lovely Day.” He smiles at the audience of about 700 people. He’s nervous, but you’d never know it. He performs his dance effortlessly, bobbing his shoulders, sliding on cue, spinning around smoothly, throwing his arms into the air, and smiling at the crowd with a proud twinkle in his eye. When the song ends, he knows—and the audience knows—that he just totally rocked it. He grabs the microphone and introduces himself with ease: “Hi, I’m Talen.”

Not long ago, if you had asked Talen to perform on stage, he’d have looked at you as if you’d asked him to sprout wings and fly to

Mars. In fact, talking to just one person was a big challenge for Talen. That’s because he has a speech problem known as stuttering.

Stuttering is a speech **disorder** that makes it hard to say words out loud. People who stutter often repeat or stretch out words, or become silent in the middle of a sentence. The problem is common among kids ages 2 to 5. Most outgrow it, but a few continue to stutter as they get older. About 3 million Americans—or 1 percent of the population—stutter.

A Puzzling Problem

The causes of stuttering are not well understood. Many experts think stuttering is likely **inherited**. They believe some people are born with a **tendency** to develop stuttering. The source of the problem probably lies in the part of the brain that controls language.

Most people who stutter are no different from you. Visit Talen in his Brooklyn, New York, apartment and you’ll find him watching Spider-Man movies, making clay sculptures,

Talen rehearses his showstopping moves (left). Performing has boosted his confidence on and off the stage.



or eating fried rice with duck sauce with his family. He loves reading and has plenty to tell you about the book he just read about snakes. His mind is filled with fascinating facts he wants to share. (Talen's fascinating fact of the day: Some female snakes can lay up to 100 eggs at a time.) The problem is that when Talen opens his mouth to talk, sometimes the words don't come out the way he wants them to. He repeats words or says the same word over and over, such as *like*.

He's been facing this challenge—and coping with the embarrassment that often comes with it—since he was 5. "When I was little, my cousin drew a picture of me and drew a word bubble next to my face. She wrote in the word bubble, 'Hi, I'm, I'm, I'm Talen,'" he says. "It hurt my feelings."

By first grade, the problem bothered him so much that he rarely spoke in class for fear he would be **humiliated**. “I didn’t raise my hand a lot in class. If a teacher asked for a volunteer, I’d duck,” says Talen.

A Big Change

Sometimes people grow impatient when Talen speaks and say, “Spit it out,” or they finish his sentences for him. But that puts pressure on him, and speaking becomes even more challenging. (Talen’s advice: The best thing a listener can do is wait patiently for a person who stutters to finish.) It’s also tough for him to make friends at school because some kids find it easier to avoid Talen than to talk to him.

But Talen’s life began to change two years ago, when he joined SAY: the Stuttering Association for the Young. The group teaches kids who stutter how to sing, dance, act, and recite speeches. The goal is to build kids’ confidence. “We have so much fun,” says Talen.

The founder and president of SAY, Taro Alexander, relates to what Talen has gone through, because he also started stuttering at age 5. “I spent a lot of my life feeling like that kid on the sidelines and wanting really badly to get into the game, but not having the courage to jump in because of fear of being made fun of or teased,” says Alexander.

He gained confidence by becoming a professional actor at age 19 and performing on TV shows and in musical theater

Famous Stutterers

Stuttering didn’t limit the success of:



Tiger Woods



Emily Blunt



King George VI



Joe Biden

productions. In 2001, at age 29, he created SAY. “I wanted to show kids that stuttering doesn’t have to hold them back from anything,” he says.

Since performing helped him so much, he thought it would be a great way to engage kids and boost their confidence. “The amazing thing about the arts is that it’s a perfect way to help people express how they feel. It helps kids come out of their shells in a brilliant way,” says Alexander.

No Longer Alone

Talen goes to SAY for about two hours each week. “I like to dance,” says Talen. “It brings out the inner me.” Singing? Not so much. “I don’t have a good voice. I want to use Auto-Tune,” he jokes. Each spring, all the kids in SAY perform onstage in front of hundreds of parents and other supporters of the organization.

Going to SAY hasn’t solved Talen’s stuttering problem. But it has helped him feel less **self-conscious**. Plus, he’s made friends. Before joining SAY, he knew only two people who stuttered. Now he has met more than 170, which makes him feel less alone.

The program has helped Talen at school

too, since speaking in class is nothing compared with talking in front of hundreds of people. He’s getting better grades, and his teachers have noticed that he speaks up more. “I’m less afraid to raise my hand in class now,” says Talen. “Sometimes I stutter and sometimes I don’t, but I don’t care anymore. I feel like a new person.” 🗣️

Talen gets advice from SAY founder Taro Alexander.



The Incredible Power of Speech

Human beings are amazing creatures. But in terms of awesome powers, nothing beats our ability to talk.

What could be easier than talking?

We chat with our friends, whisper our secrets, scream at our little brothers, and cheer for our favorite teams. By the end of life, the average person will have **uttered** approximately 370 million words.

But the ability to speak—to express thoughts and feelings through different sounds—is a complex human skill.

Key to Survival

All living creatures can communicate in some way. Cobras fan out their hoods to warn their enemies. Fireflies set their tails aglow to attract mates. Sea lion mothers **bellow** to call their babies home. From mighty mammals to tiny insects, being able to communicate in some way is a key to survival.

But communicating is different from speaking. Only humans have the ability to speak.

Speaking might seem

simple. But just uttering three little words like “Hey, what’s up?” is a complicated trick.

A Mysterious Process

Many parts of your body have to work together when you talk. First, your lungs

tongue, lips, jaw, and teeth makes this happen. The whole amazing production is controlled by your brain.

Speech is so complex that scientists have struggled to understand how it works. It’s been difficult to find cures for speech disorders,

like stuttering. But in recent years, scientists have made breakthroughs. In 2013, scientists at the University of California, San Francisco, pinpointed the parts of the brain that control some portions of the speech process.

Soon enough, experts agree, the amazing power of speech will no longer be such a mystery. ■



Elephants can’t talk, but they can communicate “I love you” by entwining their trunks.

exhale air across your larynx, or voice box, which is in your throat. Inside your larynx are your vocal chords, two rubbery folds that vibrate in the rush of air. These chords produce the sound of your voice, which the voice box makes louder.

And that’s just the beginning. To make words, the vibrating air needs to be broken up into different sounds. A team effort by your



Look out! Gorillas stick out their tongues to tell you they’re mad.

WHAT’S THE CONNECTION?

Imagine you have a friend who stutters. Using details from both texts, write an article for the school newspaper to help your classmates understand the challenges he faces and how they can be helpful.

**FIND AN
ACTIVITY
SHEET
ONLINE!**

**HELP
A FAMOUS
AUTHOR**

Create a Character CONTEST

Author **Wendy Mass** Needs Your Help!

Hello, fellow writers,

I've written 17 books so far. At about 10 to 20 characters per book, that means I've had to think up (hang on while I grab my calculator—I'm a writer, not a mathematician!) more than TWO HUNDRED FIFTY CHARACTERS! Wow! That's a lot! I'm tired! Maybe you can help me?

I'd love to see what kind of characters *you* can create! One of them will become the main character of a story in *Storyworks*. Here's a tip to get you started: Think of your character's quirks, dreams, family, hobbies—until you feel like you'd know your character if he or she came through the door and pulled up a chair.

Have fun with it!

Your fellow writer,

Wendy Mass ☺



P.S. Even if your character doesn't wind up in my story, I hope he/she/it winds up in yours! We all have stories to tell, and no one can tell your story like you can!



Wendy has written 17 books, including *A Mango-Shaped Space*, *The Candymakers*, *Pi in the Sky*, and *11 Birthdays*.

HOW TO ENTER

Create a memorable character and include your character's:

- ▶ Name, age, and hometown
- ▶ Appearance
- ▶ Skills and hobbies
- ▶ Problem that needs solving
- ▶ Dreams for the future

The more details the better!

GRAND PRIZE

- ▶ Wendy Mass's story starring your character will appear in the April/May 2015 issue.
- ▶ Your teacher will win a free two-year subscription to *Storyworks*.
- ▶ Your class will receive a signed class set of Wendy's book *11 Birthdays*.

4 FINALISTS will have their characters appear on the *Storyworks* website.

75 RUNNERS-UP will win a *Storyworks* prize.



Send your entry to "Character Contest" by October 15, 2014. An entry form can be found on our website:

www.scholastic.com/storyworks

See page 2 for more details.

OUR ONLINE VIDEO WILL HELP YOU CREATE A CHARACTER!

A young boy with brown hair, wearing a white polo shirt and blue jeans with a black backpack, stands on a sidewalk. To his left is a quiver of arrows with red fletching. In the background, a two-story house with a blue door sits on a green hill. In the foreground, a hand holds a glowing grey rose, and a brown and white dog looks up at the boy.

Silverman City

Can anyone save
Danny Sanchez
from the town's
meanest bully?

BY JENNY NIMMO
ART BY JOHN UELAND



Problem and Solution The main character in this story faces a big problem. As you read, look for what it is and how it's solved—and who helps him.

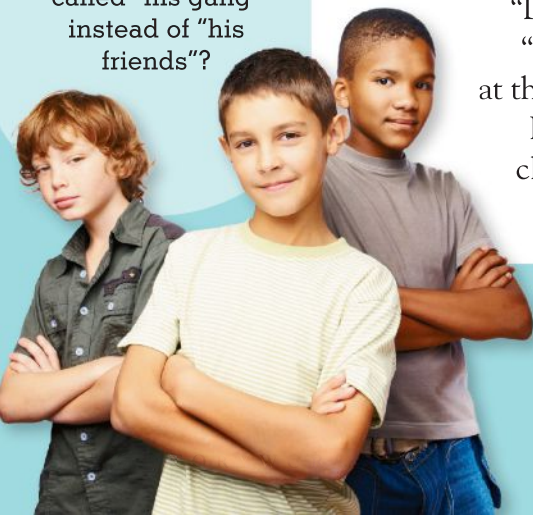
FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

What feeling does this comparison—called a simile—create?



WORD CHOICE

Why are they called “his gang” instead of “his friends”?



In the hills above Silverman City, there's a small white house with sparkling windows and **a door so blue it looks like a piece of sky**. On top of the house, something spins in the sunlight; it's so bright you can see it for miles.

Not so long ago, the house was almost a ruin. The roof leaked, the paint was peeling, and most of the windows were cracked.

Danny Sanchez lived in the old house with his widowed mother. As a matter of fact, he still lives there. Every weekday, he walks down the steep road to the bus stop at the edge of the city. And he's always smiling.

There was a time when Danny hardly ever smiled. As he walked to the bus stop, he would glance anxiously behind him, dreading the moment when Aaron Atkins appeared.

Aaron was a year older than Danny. He had thick, red hair and a freckled face, and **he was always followed by his gang**: Ned and Mickey Le Bon. When Aaron called, “Hi there, skinny Sanchez, what have you got for me today?” his gang would pull Danny's backpack away and take out his lunch, his books, and his can of Coke. They would throw the books in the road and give the food to Aaron. If Danny tried to stop them, Aaron would trip him, and he'd fall on the sidewalk, grazing his hands and knees.

Danny never told his mother. She had enough to worry about. She worked all day, cooking and cleaning for other people, and when Danny came home she was often fast asleep.

On the first day of fifth grade, when Danny looked over his shoulder in the usual nervous way, he didn't see Aaron Atkins, but he did see a girl with dark curly hair and a young man walking behind her.

“Hi!” said the girl, running to catch up with Danny. “Are you going to Silverman Elementary?”

Danny told her he was and asked if she was going there too.

“Sure am,” said the girl. “We just moved here. What's your name?”

“Danny Sanchez.”

“I'm Rose Summer, and that's my brother, Joel.” The girl looked back at the burly young man, who lifted his hand and said hi.

Danny saw Aaron and his gang walking several paces behind Joel. He clutched his backpack and began to walk faster.

“What's up, Danny?” asked Rose.

CHARACTER

What does this detail tell you about Danny?



KEY IDEA

A legend is a story handed down from long ago. Some legends are partly based on facts. Could this be one?



"It's nothing," said Danny. He began to relax. Aaron wouldn't try anything with Joel around. Joel looked as if he could tackle a gang of 10.

When the bus arrived, Rose sat next to Danny. She told him that her family had just moved into a house at the end of Danny's road. Her father and her brother were builders, and they had already found plenty of work in Silverman City.

"Mum and I liked the idea of living in a city with a legend," said Rose. "I guess you know all about the legend of the silverman?"

Danny nodded. His mother had told him that long, long ago, when Silverman City was just a cluster of shacks, a stranger had appeared—a vagrant in a big black hat. He had a bow and arrows slung over his shoulder, and a small dog ran at his feet. He also carried a bag of silver, and the townsfolk began to call him the silverman because he was generous with his treasure. If anyone was in trouble, if they were ill, or their business was failing, the silverman would help them.

The town grew, but one day a hurricane came roaring across the land and reduced it to rubble. Many people died, including the silverman, so they said.

A new city rose up out of the ruins. It prospered, but every place has those who are unfortunate. Every once in a while, poor, homeless, or troubled people would find silver coins in their pockets, or a silver ring or brooch. It was always enough to save their lives and turn their luck around. Folks said the silverman had returned—unless it was his ghost.

"Do you believe in the silverman?" Rose asked Danny.

Danny shook his head. "I never met anyone who found a pocketful of silver. There's a poor, shabby man at the end of our road with a dog that looks close to starving. I guess they need silver more than most."

For a whole week, Danny was safe. Rose's brother, Joel, came to the bus stop with her every day, and Aaron never made a move against Danny.

On the following Monday, though, Rose was alone. "Joel had to start work early," she told Danny. **"He said I'd be OK now that I've got a friend to walk with."**

Danny smiled, and then his face fell. Aaron leaped in front of him with a nasty gleam in his eye. "So, skinny Sanchez, what have you got for me today?"

"Nothing," said Danny, trying to look brave.

Ned and Mickey ran and stood beside Aaron.

"Come on, hand it over," said Aaron.



INFERENCE

What is Rose saying to Danny? (Hint: It makes him smile.)



CHARACTER

Why doesn't Danny want Joel to help him?

CHARACTER

How does seeing the shabby man and his dog affect Danny?

"What are you doing?" asked Rose in a scared voice.

"We want Danny's lunch," said Ned. "Don't we, Danny?"

"You can't have it," said Danny, gritting his teeth.

"Oh, no?" Aaron kicked Danny's shins, and Danny fell on the sidewalk. Ned and Mickey wrenched off his backpack and emptied it onto the ground.

"Aha!" cried Aaron, pouncing on a chocolate bar. "You don't deserve chocolate, skinny Sanchez. You can't have Coke. You can't eat bananas."

The gang thrust Danny's food into their bags and started flinging his books and pens all over the sidewalk.

"Stop it! Stop it!" screamed Rose, grabbing the strap of Aaron's bag. "You bully!"

Aaron tore her fingers off the strap and pushed her away. Across the street, several people looked over at the commotion, but before they could do anything, Aaron and his gang had run off.

Danny got to his feet and began to pick up his books.

"Those mean, rotten bullies," said Rose, bending to help him. "I'll tell Joel. He'll do something."

"No, don't," said Danny fiercely. **"It's my problem. I'll sort it."**

Rose seemed to understand. She gathered up Danny's pens and cleaned his bloody knee with a tissue. When they got on the bus, she handed Danny half her lunch.

Danny didn't know what to say. No one had ever helped him before. He wanted to give Rose something in return, but all he had was 10 cents, and it didn't seem right to give her so little.

During the day, the weather turned wild and stormy. When Danny turned the corner, he saw the shabby man and his dog sitting outside the Chinese takeout. The man sat with his legs stretched out on the sidewalk. The brim of his black hat was pulled down over his face, and the rain dripped onto his shoulders. The dog's head rested on its master's lap. It looked tired and thin and very old.

Danny pulled the 10 cents out of his pocket. If nothing else, it might be enough to buy the dog a bone. As he reached toward the man's gnarled, weathered palm, the shabby man's fingers closed over his hand.

A strange tingle passed through Danny's body. His heart gave a wild beat,

PLOT

How is this a turning point in the story?

and for a moment he felt quite dizzy.

The man let go of Danny's hand, and the boy stepped back.

Lying in his palm was a brooch: a shining, silver rose. Danny stared at the shabby man. "Are you . . . are you the silverman?" he whispered.

The man said nothing.

A sudden, deafening roll of thunder and a torrent of rain sent Danny running home. He showed his mother the rose that the shabby man had given him, and then he told her about the girl who'd helped him out.

Mrs. Sanchez gazed at the shiny rose. "How strange," she murmured. "I wonder . . . Give the brooch to your new friend. **I think it was meant for her.**"

The next day, Danny gave Rose the silver brooch. The girl's eyes sparkled. She pinned the rose to her blouse and wore it all day. Everyone admired it.

When Rose and Danny got off the bus that afternoon, Aaron ran up to Rose and tapped her on the shoulder. "Skinny Sanchez stole that brooch," he told her.

"I did not!" cried Danny.

"Oh, yes you did. My uncle owns a jewelry store in town. He said some kid had been shoplifting, and a silver rose was taken."

"That's not true," shouted Danny. "You're a liar, Aaron Atkins."

"You're a thief," said Aaron coolly.

Rose looked bewildered. She began to unpin the brooch.

"Rose, you don't believe him, do you?" cried Danny.

"N-no," said Rose, uncertainly.

"So where would someone like you get a silver rose, skinny Sanchez?" sneered Ned Le Bon.

"I . . . I . . . The silverman gave it to me," said Danny.

Aaron roared with laughter. "The silverman? He doesn't exist."

Danny ran to the Chinese takeout, with Aaron and his gang pounding along behind him. They found the shabby man sitting in his usual place.

"Tell them about the rose," begged Danny. "Please. You are the silverman, aren't you?"

"Him?" scoffed Aaron in disbelief. **"He's no one. He's less than no one."** He poked the dog with his foot, and Ned and Mickey screamed with laughter.

"Don't do that!" yelled Danny, shoving Aaron back. "You coward."

INFERENCE

Why does Mrs. Sanchez think the brooch is meant for Rose?

CHARACTER

Notice how Aaron treats the shabby man. How is it different from the way Danny treats him?



PLOT

This is an important event! How does it solve Danny's problem?

As Aaron raised his fist to strike Danny, **there was a violent clap of thunder, and the bully's feet suddenly left the ground. He flew through the air.** Then he stopped, stuck to a tree several yards down the road.

Ned and Mickey gaped at Aaron, their faces white with horror. He was pinned to the tree by a shining arrow that had pierced the shoulder of his jacket. "Help!" he called, in a small, scared voice.

Ned and Mickey turned on their heels and ran off faster than jackrabbits.

Rain began to fall again in heavy, glistening sheets. Danny turned to Rose, expecting her to run home before she got soaked. But Rose just stood where she was, staring down the street. When Danny followed her gaze, he saw the shabby man walking away through a veil of rain.

But was it the shabby man? For now he moved in smooth, gliding strides, and **as the raindrops touched his shoulders, they sparkled like stars.** Even the dog, bouncing beside him, wore a coat of dazzling silver.

Rose and Danny watched the two figures melt into the distance, until they were nothing but glinting water.

"He was the silverman," breathed Rose.

"He was," said Danny.

A voice called, "Help me. Please, Danny!" For a moment Aaron had been forgotten.

Danny strode up to the bully and pulled out the arrow.

Aaron slumped to the ground. "Thank you," he whispered.

Danny was never bullied again. He didn't find a pocketful of silver, but his luck changed just the same. Rose's father and brother drove up the hill with bricks and paint and brand-new windowpanes, and soon they'd repaired the Sanchez's leaky old house. When they had finished, Joel climbed up and attached the strange, shining arrow to the roof so that it spun in the wind like a weathervane.

"To remind us of the silverman," said Rose. 🌹



FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Another great simile! What does it suggest about the man?

WRITE TO WIN

Danny usually faces problems on his own. But in this story, he gets some help. Write one paragraph explaining Danny's main problem, who helps him solve it, and why. Send it to "Silverman Contest" by October 15, 2014. Ten winners will each receive a copy of *The Secret Kingdom* by Jenny Nimmo.

**FIND AN
ACTIVITY
ONLINE!**



Personification In what ways do punctuation marks seem like people in this poem?

A Punctuation Story

By Rebecca Kai Dotlich | Art by Carin Berger

Wake up!

An exclamation
starts your day,
steers the way
to a comma
that lets you pause,
then directs you like a dash—
swift, straight—
but wait—
the quiet ellipses
signal something more . . .
like compass needles
pointing to shore . . .
N, S, E, or West?

(Punctuation is the best!)

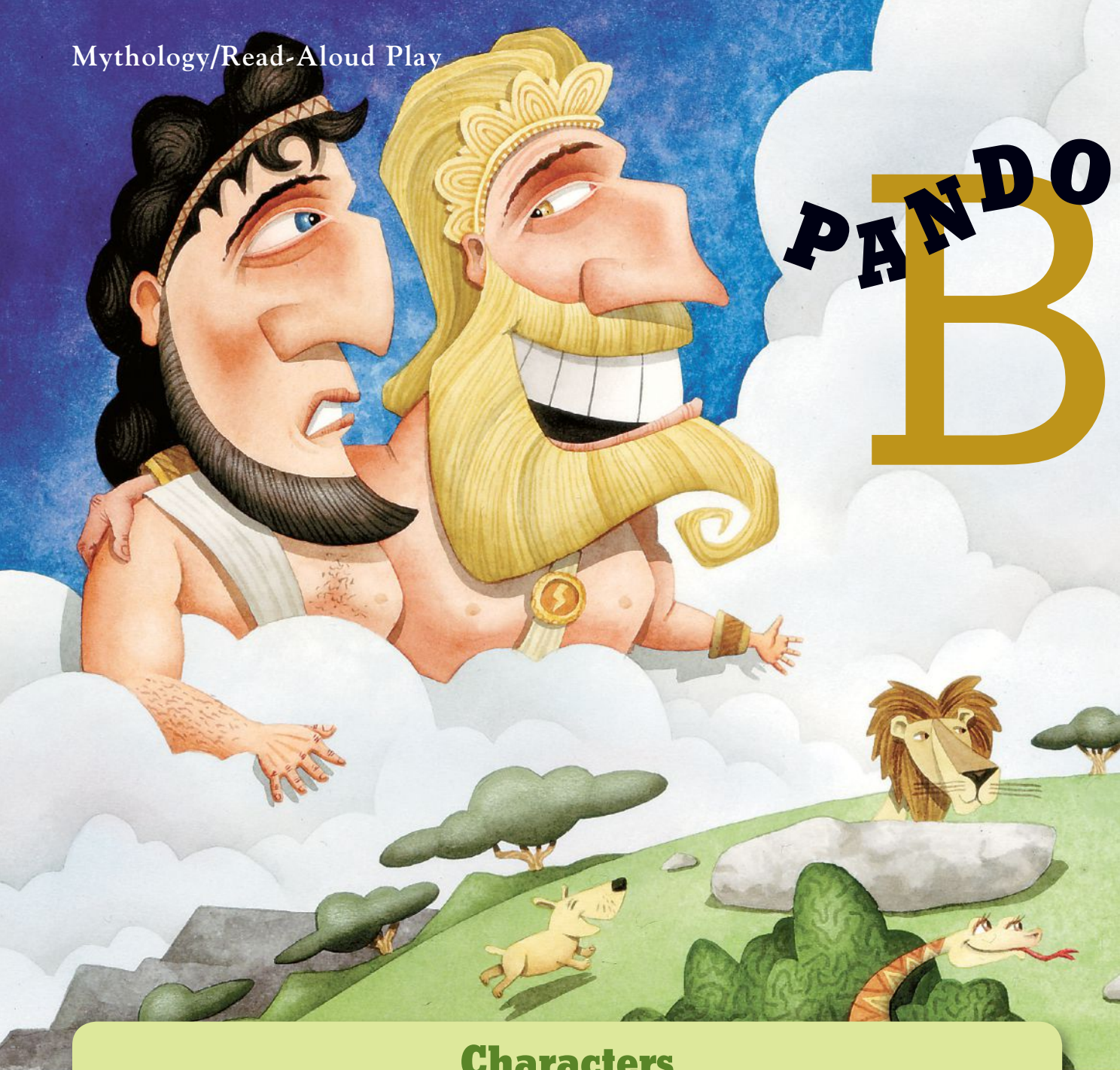
Finally, you stop
on a sleepy spot,
when you come to a small
period—a dot.
Once again
you sail away
to the island End of Day,

where sky is a scribble
of charted sparks—

with

“goodnight”

cuddled in quotation marks.



Characters

Circle the character you will play.

***Chorus Members 1, 2, 3:** help tell the action of the play

Greek Chorus: a large group of people who speak in unison

***Zeus [zooss]:** ruler of all the gods

***Prometheus [proh-MEE-thee-us]:** creator of all living creatures

***Epimetheus [ep-ih-MEE-thee-us]:** Prometheus' brother

***Pandora [pan-DOR-uh]:** the first woman, Epimetheus' wife

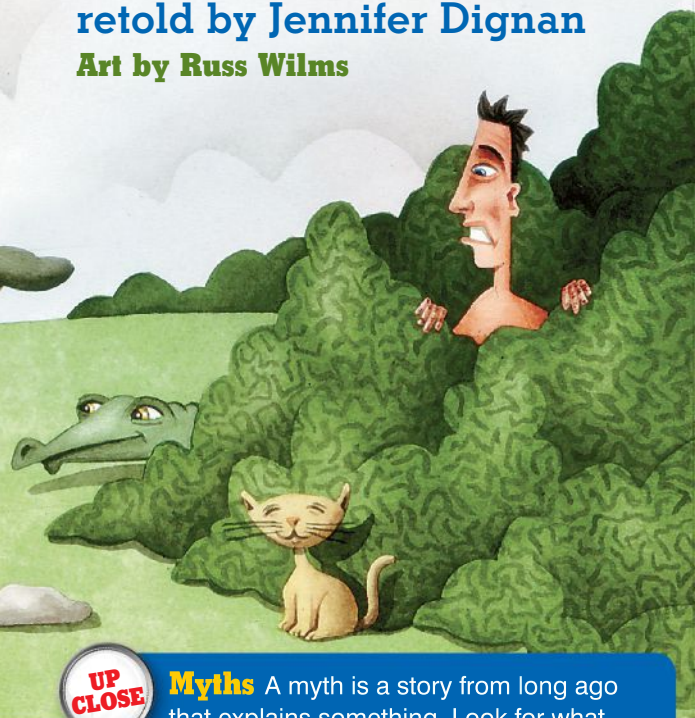
Deceit, Sickness, Jealousy, Hope: creatures in the box

**indicates large speaking role*

RA'S OX

An ancient Greek myth,
retold by Jennifer Dignan

Art by Russ Wilms



Myths A myth is a story from long ago that explains something. Look for what *Pandora's Box* explains about humans.

LOOK FOR WORD NERD'S 8 TERMS IN BOLD



Prologue

Chorus Member 1: Long, long ago, says Greek mythology, Zeus gave the task of making all the creatures on Earth to a god named Prometheus.

Greek Chorus:

Snakes that slither, cats that creep,

*Pigs that wallow, birds that peep,
Fish that swim, and dogs that howl,
Prometheus made one and all.*

Chorus Member 2: Prometheus shows his work to Zeus.

Zeus: Terrific work here. Really terrific. But what are those scrawny-looking things shivering behind those bushes?

Prometheus: Ah, yes, my latest creation. I call them humans. What do you think?

Zeus: They look a little sorry over there. Couldn't they use a little fur, like that lion? Or how about some real teeth, like those alligators? I'm really not impressed with these humans.

Prometheus: Well, if you must know, I let Epimetheus help me . . .

Zeus: You did *what*? What were you thinking?

Chorus Member 3: Epimetheus is . . . how can we say this?

Chorus Member 1 (*whispers*): A little slow.

Zeus: I'll tell you what. Get rid of the humans, and we'll call it a day. We could replace them with more of those furry barking things. I like those!

Prometheus: We can't just get rid of the humans! I'm very attached to them. How about we give them something to help them out a little? Something hot . . . smoky . . .

Zeus: Don't say it . . .

Greek Chorus:

*Zeus certainly had no desire
To even think of sharing fire.*

Prometheus: Oh, come on! You are so stingy with your precious fire.

Zeus: Fire belongs to the gods and only the gods. I forbid you to give it to those silly-looking creatures.

Prometheus (*sighing*): Well, you're the boss.

Zeus: And don't forget it.

Chorus Member 2: But Prometheus disobeys. He steals fire from **Mount Olympus** and shows the people on Earth how to use it.

Prometheus: Just rub the sticks together like

so, and there you are! Now you can roast your lamb to crispy perfection!

Chorus Member 3: Humankind is thrilled. But Zeus is furious.

Zeus: How dare you **defy** me! It's off to the mountainside for you, where birds will peck at your liver forever!

Prometheus: Wouldn't a simple time-out work?

Chorus Member 1: Prometheus is doomed to an **eternity** of suffering.

Zeus: That takes care of Prometheus. But how should I punish the humans?

Greek Chorus:

*The easy life that men enjoyed
Would soon by Zeus be destroyed.*

Scene 1

Chorus Member 2: Zeus creates a beautiful woman named Pandora. She is clever, charming, and—most important—curious.

Chorus Member 3: Zeus then introduces Pandora to Epimetheus, who falls madly in love with her.

Chorus Member 1: Remember what we told you about Epimetheus . . .

Chorus Member 2 (*whispers*): He's a little slow.

Chorus Member 3: One day, soon after their wedding, Pandora and Epimetheus hear a knock at their door.

Epimetheus: Hey, it must be Prometheus, back from his vacation.

Chorus Member 1: Epimetheus opens the door.

Epimetheus: Oh, Zeus! What an honor! Have you heard from my brother? He's still not back from that vacation you sent him on.

Zeus: Vacation? Uh, yes, his bird-watching tour. I just got a postcard from him today. But enough about him. I've come

with a wedding present, something special for my favorite couple.

Greek Chorus:

*As he wished them all the best
He handed them a padlocked chest.*

Pandora: Oh, Zeus! You shouldn't have.

Zeus: But it's the least that I could do. And exactly what you deserve!

Epimetheus: Is it an **urn**? A torch?

Zeus: No, no, nothing like that. Just a little something special that could change your lives forever.

Pandora: I can't wait any longer! Let's open it!

Zeus: Hold on a moment! There is just one condition with this gift. You must never open it.

Epimetheus: Huh?

Pandora: What's inside?

Zeus: It's something **exceptional**. That's all you need to know.

Pandora: I need to know more than that!

Zeus: I'm not surprised that you're curious, but remember: You must never, ever, under any circumstances, open this chest.

Epimetheus: Don't worry, Zeus. I've got everything under control.

Greek Chorus:

*With a grin great Zeus departed,
Knowing well what he had started.*

Chorus Member 2: The minute he is gone, Pandora runs over to the chest.

Epimetheus: Zeus told us to leave it alone, so forget about it!

Pandora: You're right. I promise never to think about it again.

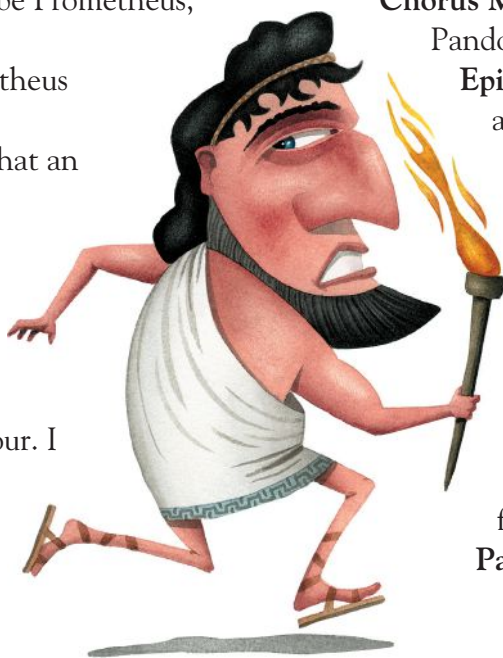
Epimetheus: Good. Let's go downtown and watch the **chariot** races.

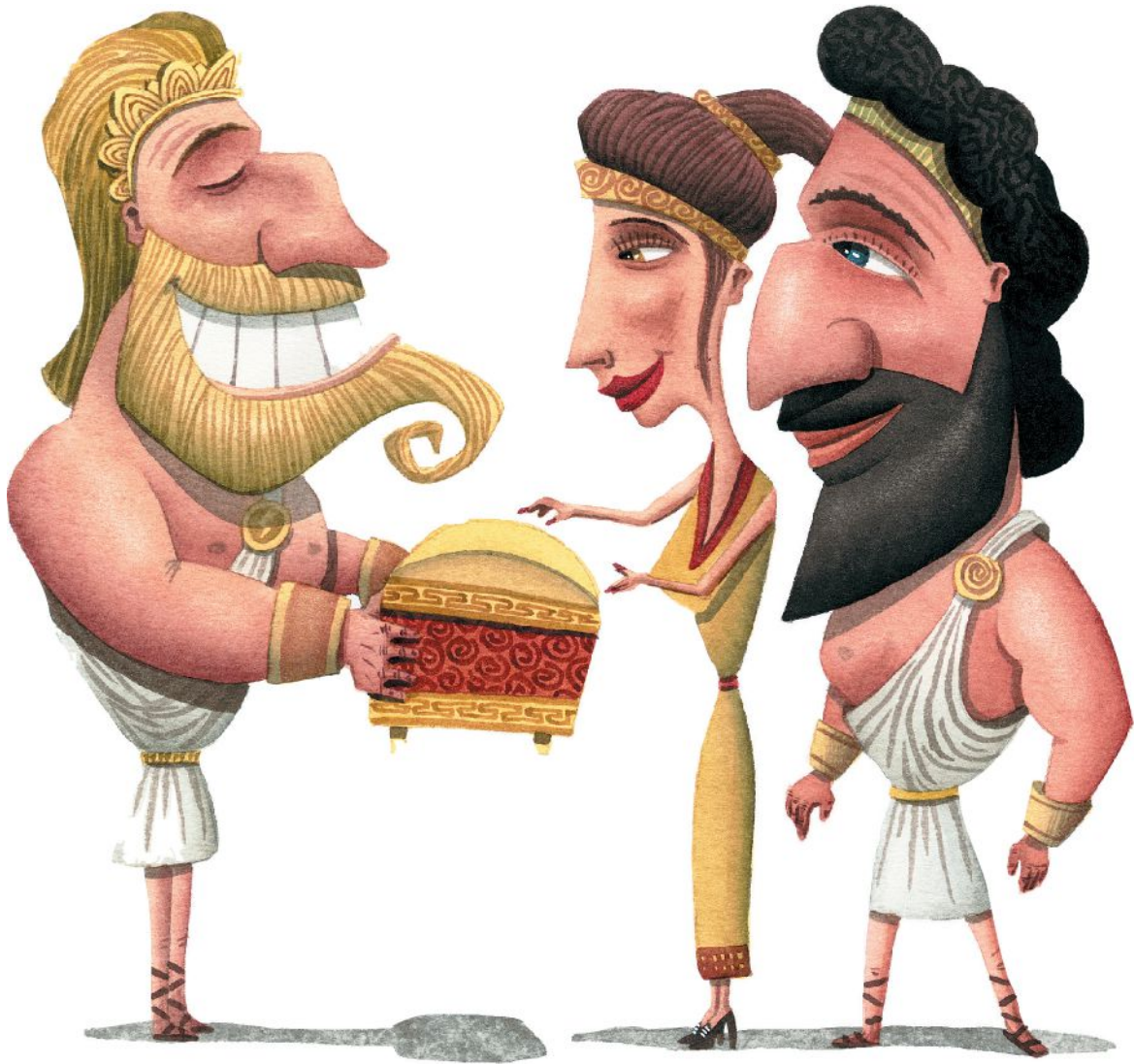
Scene 2

A few weeks later

Epimetheus: I'm going shopping for new sandals. Want to come?

Pandora: No thanks. I've got some





things to do at home.

Epimetheus: All right. Just remember . . .

Pandora: I know. Don't open the chest.

Greek Chorus:

*Pandora really tried her best
To forget about the chest.
But buzzing in her like a bee
Was her curiosity.*

Chorus Member 3: Pandora soon finds herself standing right in front of the chest.

Pandora: It can't hurt just to look at it.

Chorus Member 1: Soon, her hands are on it.

Pandora: It can't hurt just to touch it.

Chorus Member 2: Before long, her ear is pressed to the chest. She shakes it gently.

Pandora: It can't hurt just to listen to it.

Chorus Member 3: Suddenly she hears sweet

little voices coming from the chest.

Deceit: We really want to come out and play with you.

Sickness: I'm not getting any younger in here!

Pandora: Who said that?

Jealousy: Alexandros, the man up the block, was allowed to open his present from Zeus!

Pandora: No, no! I'm not supposed to open it!

Jealousy: You wouldn't believe what was in Alexandros' chest!

Deceit: Zeus really won't mind! He wants you to open it!

Jealousy: If you don't open it soon, we'll go ask Alexandros to do it.

Sickness: Come on! My back is killing me!

Pandora: I don't know. Besides, it's locked.

Jealousy: The key is in the lock.

Pandora:

So it is.

Deceit: Go ahead.

Nothing bad will happen!

Sickness: Pleease?

Pandora: Well . . .

Chorus Member 1: The chest flies open. A foul-smelling wind rushes from the box and knocks Pandora back.

Greek Chorus:

*When Pandora
turned the key,
Sickness, deceit,
and jealousy
Flew out with other
kinds of evil,
Bringing pain to all
Earth's people.*

Chorus Member 2:

A swarm of hideous creatures fly wildly around the room.

Jealousy: Woo-hoo!

Deceit: Freedom!

Sickness: ¡Hasta la vista, Pandora!

Pandora: Oh no! What have I done?

Jealousy: Looks like you've just let evil into the world, my friend! See ya!

Chorus Member 3: The horrible creatures jump out an open window and start to make their way across the earth.

Chorus Member 1: Pandora slams the window shut, but it is too late. All but one of the creatures have escaped.

Greek Chorus:

*Before that moment, life was great.
There was no anger, grief, or hate.
No one argued, no one cried,*

*No one aged,
and no one lied.*

Pandora: This is terrible! I've ruined everything.

Chorus Member 2:

Down on the floor, one creature remains.

Hope: But remember, every cloud has a silver lining, and tomorrow is a new day. Things can only get better!

Pandora: What are you talking about? Get back in the chest!

Hope: That would be a big mistake. I'm not like the others. My name is Hope, and I'm the one thing that will make life bearable with all of those nasty creatures roaming around.

Pandora: How do I know you're not just another one of them?

Hope: You must believe me, Pandora. I've got to get out there, and you've got to help me!

Pandora: Well, you do seem different from the others. Somehow, I feel better just knowing you're here.

Chorus Member 3: Pandora scoops up Hope and helps her out the window to fly off into the world.

Greek Chorus:

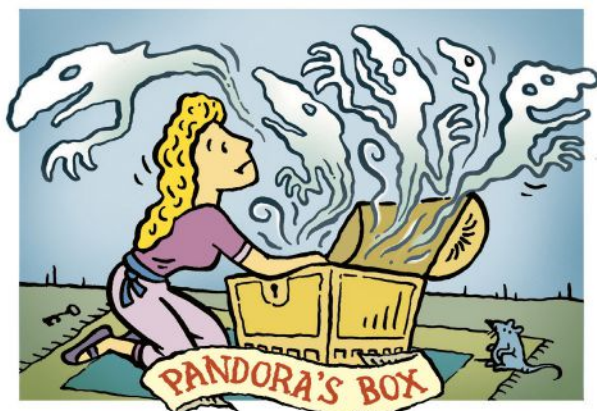
*When Pandora turned that key,
She set all kinds of horrors free.
We're just happy that she knew
To let Hope out the window too.* 🐦



Myth Talk

From books and movies (think Percy Jackson) to video games and more, Greek mythology shows up everywhere—even in our language!

Check out these common figures of speech that come from Greek myths:



The myth: Pandora was told she must not open a box. But because she was curious, she couldn't resist. When she opened it, to her horror, many evils escaped.

What it means: To "open a Pandora's box" means to start unexpected trouble.



The myth: Greedy King Midas wanted everything he touched to turn to gold. His wish came true, and soon all he put his hands on—including food, drinks, and his daughter—became solid gold.

What it means: To "have the Midas touch" means to be successful at making money.



The myth: To become a god, Hercules had to complete 12 nearly impossible tasks—like fighting multiheaded beasts. It took enormous strength to face these challenges.

What does "to make a Herculean effort" mean?



The myth: Achilles' mom dipped him into the River Styx to protect him. His heel, untouched by the river, was his only weak spot. Years later, an arrow pierced his heel, killing him.

What does "to have an Achilles' heel" mean?

TAKE
A SIDE

Debate

Directions: Read the article. Study the facts. Decide what you think. Write an opinion essay.



Should Parents Help Kids With Homework?

Homework can be stressful. But help from Mom and Dad might be the wrong answer.

Eleven-year-old Emily had been stressed for days about her school project: a PowerPoint presentation on the life of J. K. Rowling. Busy with swim-team practices and religious school, she had barely had time to work on it. So she was grateful when, the night before it was due, her dad swooped in to save her.

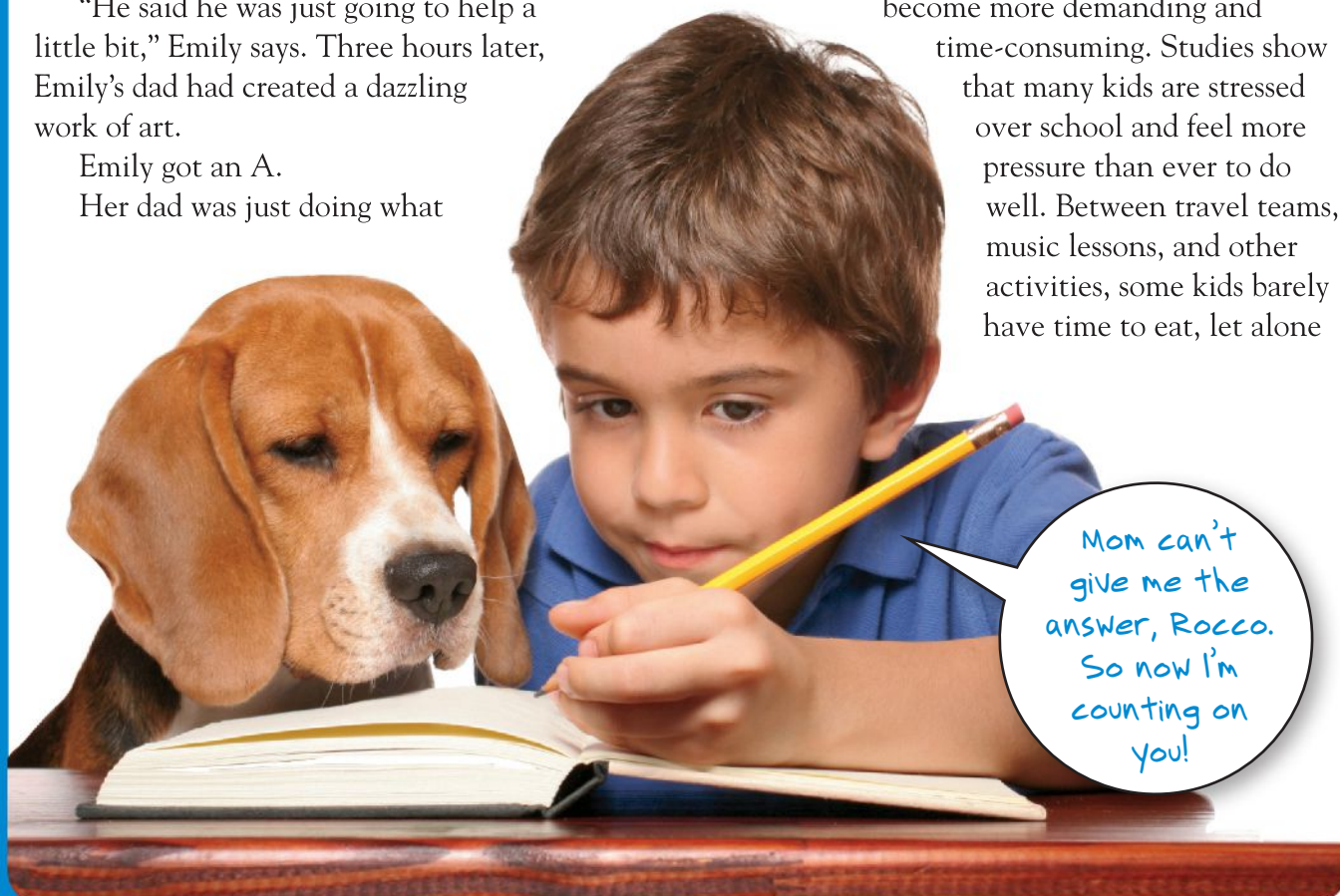
“He said he was just going to help a little bit,” Emily says. Three hours later, Emily’s dad had created a dazzling work of art.

Emily got an A.

Her dad was just doing what

many dedicated parents do every night, right? Whether it’s correcting long-division problems, giving hints on vocabulary worksheets, or “proofing” big projects like Emily’s, many parents feel it is their duty to help their children with schoolwork. And it’s easy to see why kids need the help.

In most U.S. schools, homework has become more demanding and time-consuming. Studies show that many kids are stressed over school and feel more pressure than ever to do well. Between travel teams, music lessons, and other activities, some kids barely have time to eat, let alone



do an hour or more of homework per night. No wonder homework often turns into a team effort between kids and parents.

But could all of this helping actually be hurting kids?

Practice Makes Perfect

Many experts say yes, especially when parents cross the line between helping and *doing*. Pointing out math mistakes is fine—unless a mom then reveals the right answers. Proofing a project is helpful, unless a father takes over. (Hear us, Emily’s dad?)

“I give homework for students to practice what they have learned,” says fourth-grade teacher Maura Sackett. Many educators agree

that if students can’t do the homework, they should let the teacher know so they can get the extra help they need. Plus, part of growing up is learning to balance outside activities and the demands of schoolwork.

A recent study by two university professors, called *The Broken Compass: Parental Involvement With Children’s Education*, found that kids who got extensive homework help from their parents actually scored *worse* on standardized tests than kids who managed homework on their own.

So what’s the answer to this difficult problem?

Maybe you should ask your parents—or maybe not! ■

WHAT
DO YOU
THINK?

Should parents help kids with homework?

Go back to the article and find information to support each side. Write the information on the lines below.

YES Nowadays, kids need a boost!

- 1 _____

- 2 _____

- 3 _____

NO Homework is for kids alone!

- 1 _____

- 2 _____

- 3 _____

Study the points on both sides of the argument—and think about your own opinion. State your opinion in one sentence below. It can become the thesis statement for an opinion essay on this topic.

FIND AN
ACTIVITY
SHEET
ONLINE!



Weird, Wild, and Wonderful Words



**Melissa
Rosenthal**

Yeshiva of
Central Queens
New York City

Melissa sent us this fabulous word!

One Word, 3 Ways

See how this charming chimp uses our word of the month, **digest**. It can mean “to break down food in the body,” “to think about something to understand it better,” or “a collection of articles.”

Will I get a
bellyache
while I **digest**
this? Nah.

I found
the recipe
in a cooking
digest.

Give me a
moment to
digest how
delicious it
will be.

Wild Word Contest!

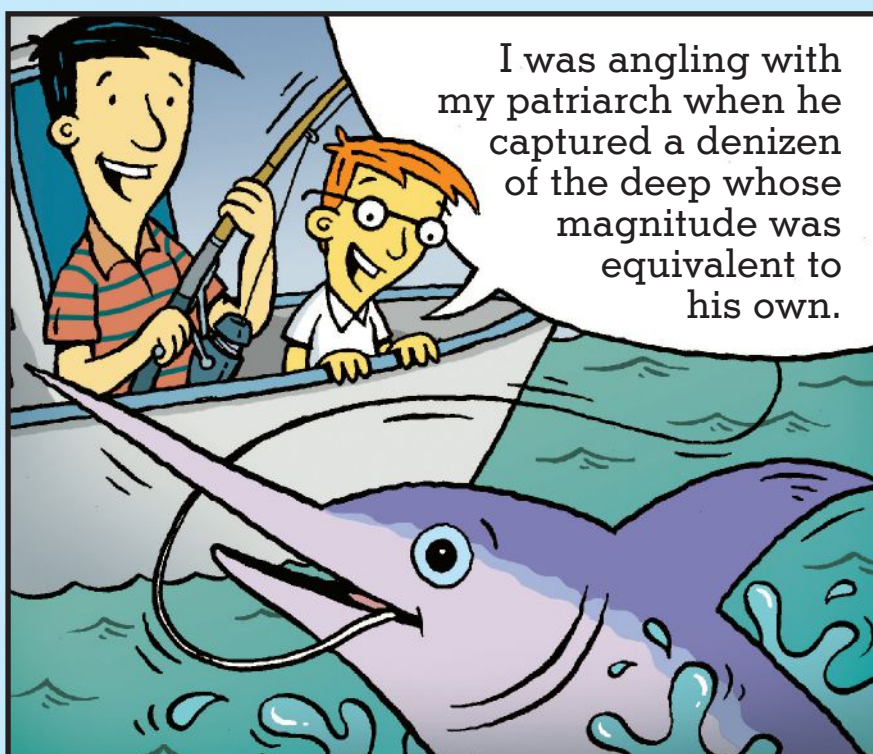
Can you find a word that can be used at least three different ways? Send it to us, along with a fabulous sentence for each meaning. If we choose your entry for a future issue, you'll get a prize! Send entries to “Wild Word Contest” by October 15, 2014. See page 2 for details.

The Adventures of The Word Nerd

Tyler Maxwell used to be a typical boy. But one day, a 10-pound dictionary fell on his head.

Luckily, he survived. But now Tyler can use only the biggest, hardest words there are. His friends don't understand him. **Can you help?**

Directions: Use a dictionary to help you figure out what Tyler is trying to say. Write your answer on a separate piece of paper.



Jordan Lapp
Hillview Intermediate
Center
Grove City, Pennsylvania

**Jordan wrote this
issue's Word Nerd!**

Word Nerd Contest!

Write your own Word Nerd exclamation. If we choose yours, you will be featured as a Real-Life Word Nerd.

Send your entries to "Word Nerd Contest" by October 15, 2014. See page 2 for more details.

SEE OUR
WORD NERD
SLIDE SHOW
ONLINE!



Your Very Own Pet Rat!

You're walking the aisles of your local pet store when an adorable rat blinks up at you. You're sold! But Mom is horrified. You've got to convince her that pet rats—unlike wild rats—are awesome. Here are some facts:

WILD RATS



EVERYWHERE



Wherever people live, rats live too. There are about 150 million in the U.S. alone.

MEAN



More than 15,000 rat bites are reported per year in the U.S. on average.

GERMY SALMONELLA



PLAGUE
RAT-BITE FEVER

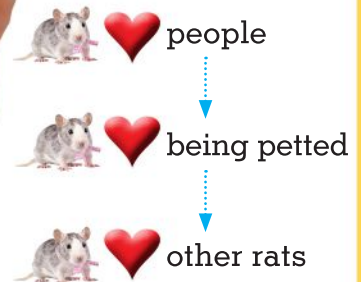
Don't confuse me with one of these guys!

Smart

- ☒ Solve mazes
- ☒ Perform tricks
- ☒ Respond to their names



Social



WHY PET RATS ROCK

Clean



Rats groom themselves several times per day.

Aren't I cute?



WRITE TO WIN

Write one paragraph to convince your mom to let you get a pet rat, using the above information to show that pet rats are different from wild rats. Send it to "Pet Rat Contest" by October 15. Five winners will each receive a *Storyworks* prize. See page 2 for details.

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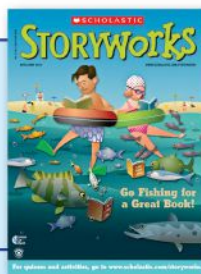
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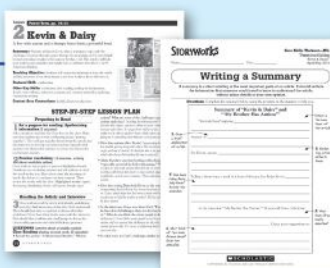
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