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The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet

WEEK 1 Think about It

People have long wondered whether other planets might have life forms. In this book, the author imagines alien creatures living on a small world circling Earth. Before reading *The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet*, think about the following questions:

- Why might it be exciting to meet creatures from another planet?
- What are some challenges you might face in such a meeting?
- How do you think new inventions might change space travel in the future?

Answer these questions on a separate sheet of paper, or discuss your thoughts with others during Workshop.

Read about It

VOCABU

infinitesimal (in fi´n te´ s m l) adj. very small (Chapter 2)

yarn (yarn) v. to tell long, fantastic tales (Chapter 3)

laths (laths) n. plural form of lath: a thin strip of wood used to build fences or wall and roof foundations (Chapter 3)

splicing (spl s´ ing) v. a form of splice: to join rope by interweaving strands (Chapter 4)

rouse (rouz) v. to stir up or awaken (Chapter 4)

Read and respond to each sentence below.

1. Circle each project for which someone might use laths.
 - a. building the wall of a house
 - b. digging a well
 - c. making a fence
2. Circle each possible use for a ledger.
 - a. cleaning ledges of a building
 - b. listing amounts of money
 - c. building fences
3. Circle each example of something infinitesimal.
 - a. a single human cell
 - b. an elephant
 - c. a planet
4. Circle each example of something with a measurable velocity.
 - a. an ongoing conversation
 - b. a speeding race car
 - c. a rocket ship taking off
5. Circle each example of someone who is cogitating.
 - a. a man thinking deeply about a problem
 - b. a woman mindlessly humming
 - c. a dog chewrcle d

7. Circle examples that show how someone might yarn.
 - a. by quietly knitting
 - b. by giggling
 - c. by telling a lengthy tall tale
8. Circle each example of splicing.
 - a. weaving together two rope ends
 - b. cutting rope into sections
 - c. measuring rope

COMPREHENSION Read Chapters 1–4 of *The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet*. As you read, answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines.

9. Based on their actions in the first chapter, make an inference about David's mother and father's feelings about Mr. Bass's newspaper notice.

10. Based on the text, describe in depth Mr. Bass.

11. What is the conflict between David and Chuck when David first tells him about the notice, and how is it resolved?

12. After Dr. Topman goes to find Thallo Street, he is "strangely quiet" at dinner. Make an inference about the reason for his silence.

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, discuss any questions you still have. Clarify any vocabulary words or ideas that are still confusing. Write any of your thoughts about the first four chapters.

WEEK 2 Read about It

VOCABULARY Below are some vocabulary words and definitions from Chapters 5–8 of *The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet*.

gawked (gôkt) v. a form of gawk: to stare awkwardly and openly (Chapter 5)

COMPREHENSION Read Chapters 5–8 of *The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet*. As you read, answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines.

8. What unusual thing about the finished spaceship causes some confusion for both David and Chuck?

9. What is Basidium-X, and why haven't scientists discovered it?

10. Why did Mr. Bass put his notice in the paper?

11. Describe Mr Bass's four inventions and how they will help the boys safely fly to Basidium-X.

Wrap It Up

Make a prediction about what will happen next to David and Chuck.

9. Use details from the text to describe in depth the surface of Basidium-X.

10. What problem do the Mushroom People face?

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, clarify any vocabulary words or ideas that are still confusing. Write a question you have about these four chapters.

9.

WEEK 5 Read about It

VOCABULARY Below are some vocabulary words and definitions from Chapters 17–20 of *The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet*.

onslaught (än´ slôt´) n. a powerful attack (Chapter 17)

ominous (ä´ m n s) adj. threatening; foreboding (Chapter 17)

disconsolately (dis kän´ s l t l) adv. in a glum or sorrowful way (Chapter 18)

bereaved (bi r vd´) adj. deprived of a loved one because of a death (Chapter 18)

biding (b d´ ing) v. a form of bide: to stay and wait for (Chapter 19)

aforementioned (a for´ men´ sh nd) adj. previously talked about (Chapter 20)

viridian (vûr i´ d n) adj. bluish-green (Chapter 20)

windward (win´ wûrd) n. the side from which the wind blows (Chapter 20)

Read each item, and then answer each question. Write your answers on the lines.

1. The little boy cried disconsolately. By his foot lay a broken bike.

Question: Why did the boy cry disconsolately?

- 2.

5. “I asked you for viridian paint, but this is scarlet,” the woman said in irritation.

Question: Why was the woman irritated?

6. “If you want the boat to move, you need to turn the sail windward,” the sailor remarked.

Question: Why would moving the sail windward help the boat move?

7. The ominous music made Antonio’s skin prickle with fear.

Question: Why did the music make Antonio’s skin prickle?

8. At the sight of the onslaught of rain, Uma knew what to grab before leaving her house.

Question: What might Uma have decided to grab and why?

COMPREHENSION Read Chapters 17–20 of *The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet*. As you read, answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines.

9. What realization does David make back on Earth about Chuck and his speech on Basidium-X?

10. Besides talking to Mr. Bass, what ideas does David have for proving the reality of his trip to his mother, and what does he find out that thwarts his plan?

WEEK 6 Talk about It

COMPREHENSION Think about *The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet*. Work with a partner during Workshop to answer these questions.

1. Chuck and David explain part of the scientific method to the Mushroom People. Explain one way the boys act as scientists while on Basidium-X.

2. Compare and contrast life on Basidium-X with life as Chuck and David know it in California.

3. Based on details from the text, why couldn't the boys have reproduced the spaceship and flown again to Basidium-X? Why do you think the author ends the book this way?

Write about It

You are going to plan and write an original science fiction story.

PREWRITING The author of *The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet* imagined a second invisible moon of Earth and the life it might support.

People have long wondered what life might be like on other planets, and many science fiction stories tell about such life forms. Science fiction can also include inventions that do not yet exist, such as the powerful fuel and special rocket-ship coating Mr. Bass created to help the boys in this book travel through space.

Choose a planet, real or imaginary, and think about the creatures that might live there. How might a future human travel to that planet and meet those creatures? What would be the result of this interaction?

Use the WWW-H2-W2 questions to help you plan your science fiction story:

- Who are the characters in the story?
- When does the story take place?
- Where does the story take place?
- How do the characters react at different points in the story?
- How does the story end?
- What does the main character want to do?
- What happens in the story?

DRAFTING Using your prewriting plan, write a draft of your science fiction story.

REVISING After you have finished your draft, read it aloud to a partner during Workshop. Have your partner ask questions about anything unclear in your story. Make any changes that will help clarify those details.

EDITING Read through your revised draft. Mark any mistakes you made in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Fix those errors as you write a new copy of your science fiction story.

PUBLISHING Write or type a final, clean copy of your story. Include an illustration if possible.

Wrap It Up

During Workshop, read aloud your science fiction story to a group of classmates. Have your classmates discuss your imaginary inventions and creatures. Compare your story with other science fiction stories you and your classmates have read.



Background Information

The following facts might help you better understand this book:

- In *Wonderstruck*, author Brian Selznick uses an unusual format. He tells two stories at the same time, one through words and one through illustrations. To understand the illustrated story, the reader must play detective, using visuals as clues to the names of characters and the story's time period.
- The American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) aims to research and teach about the natural world and human cultures. A man named Albert Smith Bickmore suggested the idea for this New York City-based museum in the 1860s. Carl Akeley, a naturalist and explorer, found a way of creating lifelike animal displays for this and other similar museums. By the 1920s, AMNH was famous for its realistic dioramas.

WEEK 1 Think about It

Storytelling drawings like those in *Wonderstruck* and creative museum displays like those in the American Museum of Natural History are both types of art. Before reading this novel, think about the following questions:

- What can artwork communicate about its creator?
- Which museums have you visited? Did any display affect you in a special way?
- Compare and contrast what it's like to experience text-based literature, graphic novels, and movies.

Answer these questions on a separate sheet of paper, or discuss your thoughts with your classmates during Workshop.

Read about It

VOCABULARY Below are some vocabulary words and definitions from page 1 (image shows a running wolf) through page 157 (beginning sentence: "In the distance, he saw the blue telephone.").

engraving (in gr´ving) n. a carved design on a hard surface (p. 20)

ejecta (i jek´t) n. material thrown out by an explosion or impact of a meteor (p. 21)

beckoned (be´knd) v. a form of the verb beckon: to invite (p. 68)

buckle (bu´kl) v. to give way or bend (p. 84)

inscription (in skrip´shn) n. a written dedication in a book (p. 96)

curated (kyûr´ t d) v. a form of the verb curate: to choose, organize, and care for items in a collection (p. 97)

cascade (kas k d´) v. to pour quickly and in large amounts (p. 98)

ornately (or n t´ l) adv. in an intricate way (p. 108)

Read the following sentences below. Write the vocabulary word that means the same thing or nearly the same thing as each underlined word or group of words.

1. We admired the etching on the castle walls. _____
2. Beads elaborately adorned the queen’s gown. _____
3. When I heard the shocking news, I felt my knees bend beneath me.

4. The majestic mountains pulled us to our hike. _____
5. With the sudden flood, water began to gush over the footbridge.

6. The erupting volcano’s thrown rock traveled a great distance.

7. That man chose and organized many of the museum’s most famous exhibits. _____
8. My grandmother wrote a lovely dedication in the front of that book.

COMPREHENSION Read from page 1 (image shows a running wolf) through page 157 (beginning sentence: “In the distance, he saw the blue telephone.”). As you read, answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines below.

9. Based on what you know about Ben, make an inference about the following quote from the text: “He had believed his mother when she told him he’d never be lost as long as he could find the North Star. But now that she was gone, he realized it wasn’t true.”

WEEK 2 Read about It

VOCABULARY Below are some vocabulary words and definitions from page 158 (image shows silhouette of Rose running) through page 297 (beginning sentence: “Trying to look in every direction at once made Ben dizzy.”)

fragments (frag´ m ntz) n. plural form of fragment: a small part broken off something (p. 194)

indentation (in´ den t ´ sh n) n. a deep recess on something’s surface (p. 194)

dingy (din´ j) adj. dull and drab (p. 242)

bombarded (bäm´ bar´ d d)

4.

9. What does the reader learn about Rose's relationship to Lillian Mayhew? Explain how you know.

10. Using details from the text, make an inference as to why Ben travels to New York City.

Wrap It Up

Make a prediction about what will happen next to Ben or Rose.

WEEK 3 Read about It

VOCABULARY Below are some vocabulary words and definitions from page 298 (image shows Rose in her mother's dressing room) through page 429 (beginning sentence: "I have to go home, Jamie.")

disintegrated (dis in´ t gr´ t d) v. a form of the verb disintegrate: to decay into small parts (p. 308)

remnants (rem´ n nts) n. plural form of remnant: a remaining part of something (p. 320)

inhaled (in h ld´) v. a form of the verb inhale: to eat very quickly (p. 329)

dioramas (d´ ra´ m z) n. plural form of diorama: a model showing a scene with three-dimensional figures (p. 329)

undulating (un´ j l´ ting) adj. curving and wavelike (p. 344)

lopsided (läp´ s´ d d) adj. with one side lower than the other (p. 366)

portages (por´ ti j z) n. plural form of portage: the carrying of a boat from one body of water to another to continue travel (p. 393)

acquisition (a´ kw zi´ sh n) n. something bought or received (p. 409)

Answer each vocabulary question below.

1. Why might it be difficult to learn to ride a bike on an undulating path?

- 2.

5.

11. Explain the significance of a piece of paper on top of the Ahnighito Meteorite in both Rose's and Ben's storylines.

12. Which diorama greatly startles Ben, and why?

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, clarify any vocabulary words or ideas that are still confusing. Write a question you have about these pages.

WEEK 4 Read about It

VOCABULARY Below are some vocabulary words and definitions from page 430 (image shows a hand gripping Rose's arm) through page 523 (beginning sentence: "Are you ready?")

undertake (un' dŭr t k ') v. to take on (p. 451)

colleagues (kă' l gz) n. plural form of colleague: a fellow worker in a profession or business (p. 451)

correspondences (kor' spän' d ns z) n. plural form of correspondence: communication through letters or e-mail (p. 462)

incomprehensible (in kăm' pri hen' s b l) adj. not understandable (p. 485)

nausea (nô' z) n. a feeling of being sick to one's stomach (p. 491)

momentarily (m' m n târ' l) adv. for a very brief time (p. 508)

Read each sentence. Write an answer using one of the vocabulary words.

1. Describe an amusement park ride that might make you feel a little sick.

2. How might you prepare for a long hiking trip?

3. From whom do you most enjoy receiving letters, cards, or e-mails, and why?

4. Why might a doctor like to meet with other doctors who help similar types of patients?

5. Describe a time that a friend of yours did something you didn't understand.

WEEK 5 Read about It

VOCABULARY Below are some vocabulary words and definitions from page 524 (image shows Ben and Rose leaving the bookstore) through page 629 (image shows “The End”).

ecstatic (ek sta´ tik) adj. full of joy and excitement (p. 545)

coping (k ´ ping) v. a form of the verb cope: to manage something difficult (p. 547)

aspect (as ´ pekt) n. a certain way in which something may be considered (p. 548)

boroughs (bûr ´ z) n. plural form of borough: one of five political divisions of New York City (p. 550)

submerged (sub mûrjd ´) v. a form of the verb submerge: to completely cover (p. 588)

arched (archit) v. a form of the verb arch: to curve up in an arch shape (p. 590)

Read each sentence below. Decide whether the underlined word makes sense. If it does, write correct on the line. If it does not, write the vocabulary word that should replace it.

1. When the boy arched the sponge in the water, it softened. _____
2. The ecstatic team members celebrated their victory. _____
3. Coping with a lack of sleep can be difficult. _____
4. Once finished, the new bridge submerged across the rushing river.

5. Have you thought about every aspect of that question? _____
6. Brooklyn is one of the boroughs of New York City. _____

COMPREHENSION Read from page 524 (image shows Ben and Rose leaving the bookstore) through page 629 (image shows “The End”).

As you read, answer the following questions to check your understanding. Write your answers on the lines below.

7. Where does Rose take Ben, and why?

8. What secret about the Panorama does Rose reveal to Ben? Explain her reasons for creating this secret.

9. Explain how Rose knew about Ben.

10. What aspects of Part 3 would have been different if the story had been told from Jamie's point of view?

Wrap It Up

At the end of the week, discuss any words or concepts that still confuse you. Write one or two questions you have about what might happen after the novel's end.

WEEK 6 Talk about It

COMPREHENSION Think about *Wonderstruck*. Read each item below, and write your response on the lines.

1. In many places throughout Parts 1 and 2 of the book, there are unusual connections between Ben and Rose's stories. Describe one such connection.

2. In Part 3, Rose describes running away to the American Museum of Natural History and being rescued by Walter; the author previously illustrated this event in Part 2. Compare and contrast the event's visual and text-based descriptions. What different details did you learn from each?

3. Contrast the Part 1 and Part 3 blackouts and their effects on Ben.

Write about It

You are going to plan and write a story that includes maps or diagrams.

PREWRITING In *Wonderstruck*, Rose creates a three-dimensional artwork that both maps New York City and tells a story about her son Danny's life.

Maps can be both visual aids and a form of art. Some books include maps that show important places within a story. Consider other books you've read that include maps or diagrams of story locations.

Your story should tell about one or more important events in a person’s life. He or she could be imaginary or based on your own experiences. Plan to include at least two maps or diagrams within your story, and think about how the maps or diagrams can connect with the narrative.

Use the WWW-H2-W2 questions to help you plan:

- Who are the characters in the story?
- When does the story take place?
- Where does the story take place?
- How do the characters react at different points in the story?
- How does the story end?
- What does the main character want to do?
- What happens in the story?

DRAFTING Using your prewriting plan, write a short story. Draw two maps or story-location diagrams, and decide where in the story they should appear.

REVISING After you have finished your draft, have a partner read your story during Workshop. Have the partner ask questions about anything unclear. Make any changes that will help clarify those details.

EDITING Read through your revised draft. Mark any mistakes you made in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Fix any errors as you create a new copy of your story and its visuals.

PUBLISHING Write or type a final, clean copy of your story. Include final versions of your visuals.

Wrap It Up

During Workshop, read aloud your story, and show your visuals to a group of classmates. Discuss how your maps or diagrams relate to the narrative. What would be lacking if you had not created these visuals?
