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MARCH

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MAY

TACKLING TOUGH TOPICS

Dear Teachers,

On a recent school visit in New Jersey, I had the pleasure of talking with a group of passionate *Scope* readers who pitched ideas for stories they would love to read in future issues. (One of my favorite activities on school visits is to have students “be the editor.”) The students were hungry for stories about ISIS, Ebola, terrorism—stories that would help them navigate the world we live in, the world they will one day inherit.

Bringing the world into your classroom in a developmentally appropriate way is one of our most important missions at *Scope*. It is our goal to give your students the information—and the vocabulary—they need to consider and discuss tough topics. So I am very proud of this issue’s cover story, “Shattered Lives,” about an 11-year-old Syrian refugee. It is the story of what it means to be “displaced” and of the aid workers mobilizing to help the millions of Syrian refugees in the Middle East. It is also a story about us and our responsibility to distant strangers. I encourage you to approach the topic with a candid but positive spirit. You can start with our “Behind the Scenes” video, in which I discuss why I chose this story as well as how our team crafted it with the help of the amazing humanitarian organization Save the Children.

My hope for this story is that it will build not just knowledge but also empathy. Who knows? Maybe you have a future aid worker in your classroom right now.



With warmest regards,
Kristin Lewis, Executive Editor
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E-mail me anytime!

EDITOR'S PICK

We've given our **Irony Video** a makeover! Use this engaging interactive video to help students understand situational irony. Perfect for use with this issue's play, *The Necklace*.



Congratulations to Fran Squires from Pine View School in Osprey, Florida! Fran is the Middle Level Educator of the Year. We had the honor of presenting her with the award at NCTE in November. Go Fran!

Questions about your subscription? Call us!
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YOUR JANUARY ISSUE AT A GLANCE

ARTICLE	SUMMARY	PRIMARY SKILL(S)
Grammar, pp. 2-3 “Grammar’s Worst Fears”	Students practice <i>number</i> and <i>amount</i> while reading about three celebrities’ worst fears.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conventions of standard English
Narrative Nonfiction, pp. 4-10 “Shattered Lives”	The powerful story of an 11-year-old Syrian refugee will introduce students to the current refugee crisis in the Middle East and humanitarian efforts in the region. An informational text on the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan takes students on a tour of one of the largest refugee camps in the world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Featured Skill: Central ideas and details • Vocabulary • Close-reading • Mood • Author’s craft • Inference • Text evidence • Expository writing
Drama, pp. 11-16 <i>The Necklace</i>	Adapted from the classic story by Guy de Maupassant, this <i>Scope</i> favorite has been re-conceived for Common Core with more complexity, higher vocabulary, a pairing about status symbols through time, and all new support materials. Your students will love it!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Featured Skill: Drawing conclusions • Identifying irony • Character • Compare and contrast • Evaluation • Figurative language • Text evidence • Inference
Paired Texts, pp. 17-21 “Yes, Aliens (Probably) Exist” and “Disaster at the Speed of Sound”	Are we alone in the universe? Astronomers are very close to answering this age-old question, but some people think it’s a waste of our resources to find out. Students support an opinion on the topic after reading two fascinating texts: one about the search for life on other planets and one about the cost of space exploration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Featured Skill: Supporting an opinion • Author’s craft • Text structure • Key ideas and details • Tone • Synthesizing
Debate/Essay Kit, pp. 22-23 “Should Stores Be Allowed to Spy on You?”	Many stores across the U.S. are using technology to gather information about their customers. Should we let them? Two writers face off on the debate, and your students choose who makes the best argument.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting an argument • Identifying central ideas and supporting details
The Lazy Editor, pp. 24-25 “Get a Whiff of That!”	Students correct grammatical errors and revise sloppy writing in a short nonfiction article about the annual Odor-Eaters National Rotten Sneaker Contest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conventions of standard English • Revision
Fiction, pp. 26-31 “Girls Can’t Play!”	This is the sweet story of a girl who witnesses a historic moment in baseball: a female pitcher striking out Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig! Paired with an essay on 13-year-old superstar Mo’ne Davis, the package raises big questions about stereotypes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Featured Skill: Inference • Word choice • Genre • Character • Compare and contrast • Plot • Supporting evidence
You Write It, p. 32 “How I’m Going To End Cyberbullying”	Students turn our interview with 14-year-old Trisha Prabhu, who developed software to help stop cyberbullying on social media, into an article.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarizing • Central ideas and details

MAURICE R. ROBINSON, 1895-1982, FOUNDER

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ONLINE RESOURCES (scope.scholastic.com)	COMMON CORE ELA ANCHOR STANDARDS*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PW More practice with <i>number</i> and <i>amount</i> 	L.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio: Hear the article read aloud • Video: Behind the Scenes • PW Core Skill: Central Ideas and Details • PW Close-Reading & Critical-Thinking Questions • PW Read, Think, Explain (two levels) • PW Video Discussion Questions • PW Vocabulary: Definitions & Practice • IW PW Quiz (two levels) • PW Contest Entry Form • PW Core Skill: Summarizing (two levels) • PW Core Skill: Text Features 	R.1, R.2, R.4, R.5, R.7, R.9, R.10, W.2, W.4, W.7, W.9, SL.1, SL.2, L.4, L.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio: Pronunciation guide for French words and names • Video: “Is It Ironic?” • PW Drawing Conclusions • PW Close-Reading & Critical-Thinking Questions • PW Vocabulary: Definitions & Practice • PW Literary Elements • IW PW Quiz (two levels) • PW Contest Entry Form • PW Core Skill: Mood 	R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.7, R.9, R.10, W.1, W.4, SL.1, SL.2, L.4, L.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PW Close-Reading & Critical-Thinking Questions • PW Vocabulary: Definitions & Practice • IW PW Quiz (two levels) • PW Contest Entry Form • PW Core Skill: Text Structures • PW Core Skill: Text Evidence 	R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.8, R.9, R.10, W.1, W.4, W.7, W.9, W.10, SL.1, L.4, L.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PW Scavenger Hunt • PW Essay Kit • PW IW Themed Vocabulary • PW Core Skill: Tone 	R.1, R.2, R.6, R.8, R.9, R.10, W.1, W.4, W.5, W.7, W.9, W.10, SL.1, L.1, L.2, L.4, L.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PW Commas with Coordinate Adjectives • PW Word Variation • PW Subject-Verb Agreement • PW Eliminating Extraneous Information • PW Parallelism 	L.1, L.2, L.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video: “Time Machine: the 1930s” • PW Core Skill: Making Inferences • PW Close-Reading & Critical-Thinking Questions • PW Video Discussion Questions • PW DIY Vocabulary • PW Literary Elements • IW PW Quiz (two levels) • PW Contest Entry Form 	R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.9, R.10, W.2, W.4, SL.1, SL.2, L.4, L.5, L.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PW Guide to “You Write It” Activity • PW Model Text for “You Write It” Activity • PW Contest Entry Form 	R.1, R.2, R.7, W.2, W.4, W.7, L.1, L.2

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

Shattered Lives

The powerful story of an 11-year-old Syrian refugee will introduce students to a complex side effect of war

Preview: Through the experiences of one girl, this article explores the ongoing refugee crisis in Syria and humanitarian efforts to help refugees now and in the past.

Learning Objectives: to identify the central ideas of the article and the details the author includes to support them

Key Skills: vocabulary, close-reading, mood, author's craft, central ideas and details, inference, text evidence, expository writing



Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

1 Preparing to Read

Watch the Behind-the-Scenes video.

(15 minutes, activity online)

- Distribute or project our **Video Discussion Questions**, and briefly preview them with students.
- Watch the video, in which author Kristin Lewis discusses how she wrote the article and introduces some of its challenging concepts.
- Have students work in pairs to answer the questions. Briefly review the answers as a class.

Preview vocabulary.

(5 minutes, activity online)

- Project or distribute our **Vocabulary definitions** and preview them. Highlighted words: *commodities, daunted, dire, displaced, haven, humanitarian, nongovernmental organizations, persecution*

2 Reading the Article

- Read the article as a class, beginning with the “As You Read” box on page 6. Pause at the end of each section

to allow students to ask questions or share what they found surprising or disturbing.

- As a class, read “The Zaatari Refugee Camp.”
- Break students into groups to discuss the following close-reading questions. Then have a whole-class discussion of the critical-thinking questions.

Close-Reading Questions

(10 minutes, activity sheet online)

- ▶ **What is the mood of the first section? Why does the author include the third paragraph?** (mood, author's craft) *The mood is violent and threatening. Dania and her family were “terrified, as explosions shattered the world around them.” The third paragraph describes the normal, peaceful life Dania enjoyed before the war. The author includes the third paragraph to show the contrast between Dania's life before and after the war started.*
- ▶ **What is the central idea of the section “A Brutal War”?** (central ideas) *The central idea is that the civil war in Syria has created a refugee crisis, with more than 3 million Syrians fleeing the country.*

▶ **What is a refugee? Why do you think international organizations like UNHCR and Save the Children are necessary to help refugees?** (central ideas, inference) *A refugee is a person who has been forced to flee his or her home because of war, disease, persecution, or other reasons. International organizations are necessary because refugees often end up in countries other than their own, with no resources or access to basic necessities such as food, water, and medical care. These organizations strive to provide what refugees cannot obtain on their own.*

▶ **On page 8, the article states, “Many Lebanese bitterly resent having to share their country.” Why do you think this is so?** (inference) *The article explains that Lebanon already had a high poverty rate, and now one in four persons there are Syrian refugees. With limited resources—such as schools, medical services, jobs, and food—to go around, the Lebanese might feel as if they don’t have enough to share.*

▶ **Why is school important for Dania? Include at least three reasons in your answer.** (text evidence) *School allows Dania to continue her education, which was interrupted years ago by the civil war in Syria. It also offers aid workers a way to connect with Dania’s family and provide help, such as a weather kit for their temporary home and job assistance for her father. Finally, school creates a regular routine for Dania so she can regain a sense of normalcy; she has even made a friend at school.*

▶ **Based on the informational text, what purpose do refugee camps like Zaatari serve? What problems are associated with them?** (central ideas and details) *Refugee camps provide a place where host countries and/or international organizations can offer refugees housing, food, water, and other necessities. Some are stark and seem like prisons, while others, like Zaatari, are almost like cities. Problems include crime, shortages of supplies, and the risk of diseases spreading through the dense refugee population.*

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

How does war affect children?
.....

What hardships come with being displaced from your home?
.....

How can humanitarian efforts help refugees?

Critical-Thinking Questions

(10 minutes, activity sheet online)

▶ **What do you think are the responsibilities of a host country regarding refugees? What is the responsibility of the international community?** *Answers will vary. Some students might say that countries have an obligation to help neighbors in need. Others might say that it is unfair to expect a country that is already poor to take on a huge burden. The international community must intervene to help the host country provide assistance to refugees.*

▶ **The article and sidebar explain that some refugees live in camps, while others, like those in Lebanon, are scattered among various makeshift settlements. What are the challenges of each situation?**

When refugees are scattered, it is difficult for aid workers to deliver goods and services to them. Their living situation, which might include living in a tent or other vulnerable housing, is less stable than it would be in a camp. Refugee camps, though, can be grim, with high rates of crime and disease.

▶ **Consider Dania at the end of the article. Is her situation hopeful? Explain your answer using text evidence.**

Answers will vary. Students might say that her situation is hopeful because she now goes to school. As a result, her life feels more normal. She has made a friend, and she’s making plans for her future. Others may say that her situation is not very hopeful. Although Dania is doing the best she can, it might take years before she can return to Syria, and the home she dreams about no longer exists.

3 Skill Building

Central Ideas and Details

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

Print and distribute our Core Skills activity **Central Ideas and Details** and have students complete it in groups. The activity will prepare students to respond to the writing prompt on page 10.

Differentiation

For Struggling Readers

In a well-organized paragraph, explain the challenges Dania faces as a refugee. Use at least two pieces of text evidence to support your ideas.

For Advanced Readers

Write an editorial to your local newspaper arguing that communities across the U.S. should offer asylum to Syrian refugees. Support your argument with information from “Shattered Lives” as well as your own research.

Complexity Factors

See how these texts will challenge your students.

Purpose: “Shattered Lives” describes the challenges Syrian refugees face, focusing largely on one girl’s story. It is accompanied by a text about a refugee camp in Jordan.

Structure: “Shattered Lives” weaves together narrative and informational passages. “The Zaatari Refugee Camp” uses cause-and-effect and compare-and-contrast structures.

Language Conventionalty and Clarity:

- **Vocabulary:** Challenging academic and domain-specific words include *artillery*, *displaced*, and *humanitarian*.
- **Figurative Language:** similes

Knowledge Demands: Map-reading skills and some knowledge of Middle Eastern geography will aid comprehension, as will familiarity with World War I, World War II, the United Nations, Save the Children, UNICEF, or other global aid organizations.

Lexile: 1040L (article and sidebar combined)

Literature Connections

Explore other texts about displacement.

- *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan
- *Bud, Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis
- *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank
- *The Red Pencil* by Andrea Pinkney

ONLINE RESOURCES

VIDEO: Behind the Scenes

AUDIO: Hear the article read aloud.

ACTIVITIES TO PRINT OR PROJECT:

- Video Discussion Questions
- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions*
- Vocabulary
- Read, Think, Explain: Identifying Nonfiction Elements (two levels)
- Quiz (two levels)
- Contest Entry Form
- Core Skill: Central Ideas and Details*
- Core Skill: Text Features
- Core Skill: Summarizing (two levels)

*Supports the lesson plan

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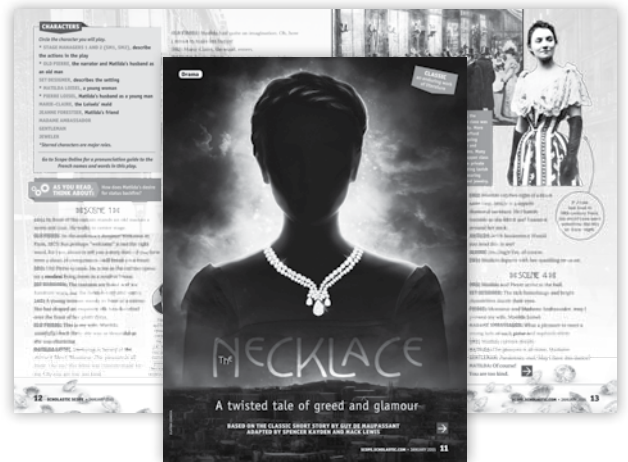
The Necklace

A twisted tale of greed and glamour

Preview: Adapted from a classic story by Guy de Maupassant, our play follows a young couple down a path of bad decisions and deceit. After reading the play, students will examine a timeline of status symbols through the ages.

Learning Objectives: to identify situational irony and draw conclusions about characters

Key Skills: drawing conclusions, identifying irony, character, compare and contrast, evaluation, figurative language, inference, text evidence



Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

1 Preparing to Read

(10 minutes, video and activity sheet online)

- As a class, watch the video “Is It Ironic?” at Scope Online; it will prepare students to identify situational irony in the play.
- Project or distribute our **vocabulary definitions** and preview the words. Highlighted words: *abject, appointed, dilapidated, haggard, modest, procure, poise, squalor, unsavory*
- Have a student read aloud the “As You Read” box on page 12. Discuss what *status* means.

2 Reading the Play

(30 minutes, activity sheets online)

- Assign parts and read the play aloud as a class. Use our audio pronunciation guide to help students with French names and other French words.
- Have students read the “Status Symbols Through History” timeline on page 16 in small groups.
- Then have groups discuss the following close-reading and critical-thinking questions.

Close-Reading Questions

- ▶ **In Scene 1, Matilda says, “How it tortures me to live in such squalor.” Does she actually live in squalor? What does this statement tell you about Matilda?** (character) *“Squalor” is an exaggeration of Matilda’s living conditions. Her home is “modest,” with faded curtains and worn furniture, but it is “cozy and warm.” She can afford to employ a maid. This statement tells you that Matilda is not satisfied with getting by comfortably. She pities herself and desires a life of glamour and wealth.*
- ▶ **In Scene 3, what conclusions can you draw about Matilda’s values?** (drawing conclusions, character) *Matilda says that she is “ashamed” because she has no jewels. She describes her kind and loving husband as “merely a clerk.” When her friend offers her a wide selection of jewels to choose from, she says, “Is there anything else?” These lines show that Matilda highly values expensive items—perhaps more highly than she values her husband’s devotion or her friend’s generosity.*

▶ **Reread Scenes 5 and 6. How does Pierre respond to the lost necklace? Do you think he does the right thing? Explain.** (evaluation) *Pierre frantically searches for the necklace and then commits to a life of debt to buy a replacement. Answers will vary. Some students may say that he acted honorably by sacrificing to replace the necklace, while others may say that if he or Matilda had been honest with Mme. Forestier, they could have avoided their debt.*

▶ **In Scene 6, Old Pierre says of the diamond necklace's 40,000-franc price, "That number still rings in my mind like a funeral bell." What does Old Pierre mean by this simile?** (figurative language) *Old Pierre compares the number to a funeral bell because a funeral bell signals the end of a life, and the high price of the necklace signaled the end of life as Pierre and Matilda knew it.*

▶ **In what way is the end of the play ironic?** (identifying irony) *It is ironic because Matilda and Pierre worked for 10 years to pay for an expensive necklace, only to find out that the original necklace was fake; their hard work and sacrifice were unnecessary. Also, Matilda's desire to appear rich is what led her to poverty.*

▶ **At the end of Scene 7, Matilda calls life "fickle." What does she mean? What does Old Pierre mean when he calls life fickle at the end of the play?** (inference, text evidence) *Fickle means easily changed or unsteady. By calling life "fickle," Matilda suggests that ill fate (rather than her own actions) caused the necklace to be lost—and along with it, her comfort. Old Pierre refers to life as fickle when Jeanne reveals the real value of the lost necklace; he also suggests that fate, rather than their failing to confess that the original necklace was lost, changed their lives.*

Critical-Thinking Questions

▶ **At the beginning of the play, Old Pierre says that he is about to tell you "a story that—if you have**

even a shred of compassion—will break your heart." Do you agree that this is a tragic story? Support your answer with text evidence. *Answers will vary. Students may respond that the story is tragic because Pierre and Matilda spend 10 years struggling to pay off debts that they had no need to incur. Others may answer that the couple got what they deserved for indulging Matilda's vain desire to appear rich and by lying.*

▶ **Examine the photos and captions on pages 13 and 15. How do you think the society in which Matilda lived might have affected her?** *The photos and captions on page 13 show that Matilda would have lived in an environment where an increasing number of people were indulging in luxuries; this could have put pressure on her to appear at the ball in an elegant gown and necklace. The caption on page 15 explains that the poor were mistrusted and scorned—treatment Matilda would have sought to avoid.*

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Why do people value status symbols?
.....

How does society shape our ideas of what will make us happy?
.....

Can money buy happiness?

▶ **The timeline shows that "only the very wealthy could afford purple fabric." Today, many people have smartphones and UGG boots. What might this suggest about how status symbols have changed?** *Answers will vary. Students might say that today's status symbols are more accessible and therefore confer less status, or that they define an "out group" more than they do an "in group."*

3 Skill Building: Drawing Conclusions

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

Distribute the **Drawing Conclusions** activity sheet. After students complete the activity, ask volunteers to share their answers. Discuss students' answers.

Answering the Writing Prompt (20 minutes)

Have groups discuss the question in the prompt on page 16. Ask students to respond to the prompt independently, drawing evidence from the play to support their answers.

Differentiation

For Struggling Readers

Alfred Nobel said, “Contentment is the only real wealth.” Would Matilda agree with this? Write your answer in a well-organized paragraph, drawing evidence from the play.

For Advanced Readers

Consider this quote from Thomas Jefferson: “It is neither wealth nor splendor, but tranquility and occupation, which give happiness.” Would Matilda agree with this idea at the beginning of the play? At the end? Do Matilda’s values change during the play? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

Complexity Factors

See how these texts will challenge your students.

Levels of Meaning/Purpose: This thought-provoking play, adapted from a classic story, offers readers a look into 19th-century French society and explores issues of values and responsibility. The infographic describes status symbols through time.

Structure: The play is chronological. The pairing is a circular timeline.

Language Conventinality and Clarity:

- **Vocabulary:** many high academic words (*wistfully, strove, dilapidated, squalor*) as well as French words
- **Figurative Language:** The play includes irony as well as examples of metaphor, simile, and rhetorical questions.

Knowledge Demands: Some prior experience with literary irony will be helpful; the ability to make inferences is necessary.

Lexile: n/a

Literature Connections

Other texts that use irony:

- *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain (verbal irony)
- “The Gift of the Magi” by O. Henry (situational irony)
- *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare (dramatic irony)

ONLINE RESOURCES

VIDEO: “Is It Ironic?”

AUDIO: Pronunciation guide for French words and names

ACTIVITIES TO PRINT OR PROJECT:

- Drawing Conclusions*
- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions*
- Vocabulary*
- Literary Elements
- Quiz (two levels)
- Contest Entry Form
- Core Skill: Mood

*Supports the lesson plan

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Yes, Aliens (Probably) Exist

Students make inferences about the pros and cons of space exploration.

Preview: An article about recent developments in the scientific search for extraterrestrial life is paired with an article about the perils of space exploration.

Learning Objectives: to form and support an opinion about the future of space exploration; to synthesize key ideas from two nonfiction texts

Key Skills: author's craft, text structure, key ideas and details, inference, text evidence, tone, synthesizing, supporting an opinion



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: *astrobiologists, astronomers, criteria, deployed, dubbed, extraterrestrial, habitable, light-years, majestic, nimble, orbited, propulsion*

Survey the class. (3 minutes)

Ask how many students believe there is life on other planets. Invite volunteers to explain their opinions.

2 Reading and Discussing

(45 minutes, activity sheets online)

Have students read the first article in small groups. Then discuss the following questions as a class.

Close-Reading Questions

▶ Consider the first section. Why might the author begin with this event? Where and how does she

answer the two questions she poses at the end of the section? (author's craft, text structure) *The author likely begins her article this way to grab the reader's attention and to introduce the topic of extraterrestrial life. She answers the two questions in the last section when she explains that what many people believed to be a news broadcast was actually a dramatization of a science-fiction novel. It is clear even before reading this section, though, that aliens did not invade New York City in 1938: The middle section of the article is about our as-yet-unfulfilled quest to find extraterrestrial life.*

▶ Describe the relationship between Goldilocks planets and the search for extraterrestrial life. (key ideas and details) *Goldilocks planets are planets within a habitable zone. If scientists discover extraterrestrial life, it will likely be on a planet within a habitable zone, so Goldilocks planets are what scientists look for as they search for extraterrestrial life.*

▶ How does the author support the idea that life likely exists on other planets? What does she state directly and what does she imply? (inference, text

evidence) *The author explains that so far, scientists have studied “only a tiny number of stars,” but that “already” one Earth-like planet has been found—implying that many more such planets may be out there. The author directly supports the idea that life exists on other planets when she quotes NASA scientist Kevin Hand, who says, “I think in the next 20 years, we will find out we are not alone in the universe,” and at the end of the article when she writes, “One day soon, scientists predict, we will find [extraterrestrial life].”*

▶ **What is the author’s attitude toward space exploration? What words, phrases, and details reveal this attitude?** (tone) *Students may say*

excited, supportive, fascinated, etc. The author reveals this attitude when she writes, “It is fascinating to wonder what extraterrestrial life might be like, and how and where we might find it,” and when she notes that “groundbreaking discoveries” have been made. She refers to astronomers’ tools as “incredible” and mentions “thrilling discoveries” and “astounding” results. She conveys excitement when she writes, “Wrap your mind around what he is saying: We could discover extraterrestrial life in your lifetime.”

• In their groups, have students read “Disaster at the Speed of Sound” and discuss the following questions.

Close-Reading Questions

▶ **Identify details about money in the text. Why does the author include these details?** (author’s craft)

The author mentions the \$250,000 price of a ticket on SpaceShipTwo, that “millions of dollars’ worth of supplies” were destroyed in the supply ship explosion, that the Kepler mission cost \$600 million, and that the Space Station cost \$150 billion. These details support his statement that exploring space is expensive.

▶ **What is the author’s attitude toward space exploration? What words, phrases, and details reveal this attitude?** (tone) *The author seems to*

have mixed feelings; he does not condemn it, but he questions whether it should be a priority. He makes the

negative comment that “few experts were surprised” by the two recent disasters. He characterizes space exploration as risky and costly. He briefly acknowledges its positive aspects but then asks, “. . . but is it right to spend billions exploring the universe when there are so many problems here on Earth?”

Critical-Thinking Questions

▶ **How does reading both articles give you a better understanding of the pros and cons of space exploration than if you had read just one of the articles?** *Reading both gives you a more balanced perspective than if you had read just one, because the first article focuses on the pros of space exploration and the second focuses on the cons.*

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What is the value of space exploration?
.....

How might the discovery of extraterrestrial life affect us?

▶ **Do you think that what happened in 1938 with the *War of the Worlds* broadcast could happen today?**

Support your opinion with details from the texts and your own ideas.

Students who say no may point to the fact that today, we know much more about space than we did in 1938; we know there is no intelligent life on

Mars. Most people today would question a story about aliens suddenly arriving here. Also, messages would appear instantly on social media that no aliens had landed in New York. Students who think the event could happen today may say that scientists are predicting that we will find extraterrestrial life in the near future, so people may be quite willing to believe that aliens exist. Social media could help convince people that the dramatization was an actual broadcast; misinformation spreads just as quickly as the truth!

3 Group Debate (10 minutes)

Should we continue to explore space? Hold a class debate. To prepare, have each student list three reasons for and three reasons against continuing space exploration. Then divide the class in half to debate. Afterward, as students decide how they will answer the writing prompt on page 21, remind them that they do not have to have a yes or no answer, but can support a more nuanced point of view.

Differentiation

For Struggling Readers

In one well-organized paragraph, compare the points of view on space exploration expressed by the authors of the two articles.

For Advanced Readers

Should we continue exploring space? Answer this question in a short argument essay. Support your ideas with details from both texts as well as from at least one additional text of your choosing.

Complexity Factors

See how these texts will challenge your students.

Levels of Meaning/Purpose: “Yes, Aliens (Probably) Exist” describes the latest developments in the scientific search for extraterrestrial life. “Disaster at the Speed of Sound” explores the costs—monetary and otherwise—of exploring space.

Structure: “Yes, Aliens (Probably) Exist” includes narrative and informational passages. “Disaster at the Speed of Sound” uses cause/effect structures.

Language Conventuality and Clarity:

- **Vocabulary:** some higher academic and domain-specific vocabulary (e.g., *extraterrestrial*, *criteria*, *propulsion*)
- **Figurative language:** similes, rhetorical questions

Knowledge Demands: The texts make cultural/news references: ISIS, H.G. Wells, the movies *Thor* and *Gravity*, and more. Familiarity with these references, and general knowledge of space exploration, will aid comprehension.

Lexile: 1000L (combined)

ONLINE RESOURCES

ACTIVITIES TO PRINT OR PROJECT:

- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions*
- Vocabulary*
- Quiz (two levels)
- Contest Entry Form
- Core Skill: Text Evidence
- Core Skill: Text Structures

*Supports the lesson plan

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Literature Connections

Other classic texts about space exploration:

- *Ender’s Game* by Orson Scott Card
- *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* by Douglas Adams
- *The Martian Chronicles* by Ray Bradbury
- *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L’Engle

DIG DEEPER! The author of “Disaster at the Speed of Sound” writes, “Unlocking the mysteries of outer space, many say, could help us solve problems on Earth.” Research to find out more—how could discoveries in space help us?

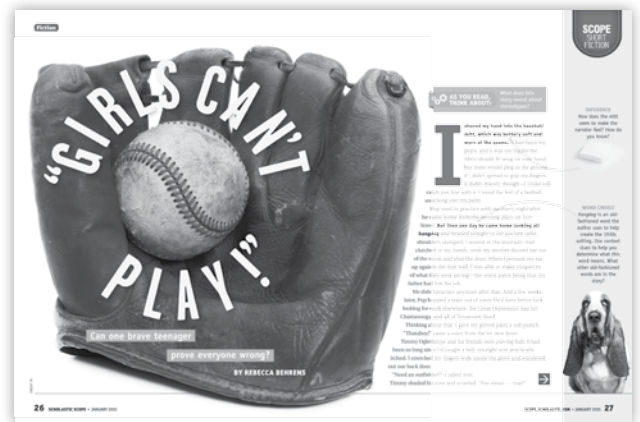
“Girls Can’t Play!”

In the 1930s, a historic baseball game gives a girl hope.

Preview: This is the sweet story of a girl who witnesses a historic moment in baseball: a female pitcher striking out Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig. (Yes, this is based on a real event!) Plus: an essay about 13-year-old superstar Mo’Ne Davis and the struggle for equality in sports.

Learning Objectives: to make inferences about stereotypes from works of fiction and nonfiction

Key Skills: inference, word choice, genre, character, compare and contrast, plot, supporting evidence



Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

1 Preparing to Read

Watch the video. (10 minutes)

Distribute our **Video Discussion Questions** and read them as a class. Then play our **Time Machine Video** about the 1930s, which will build your students' understanding of the era in which “Girls Can't Play!” is set. Discuss the first set of questions as a class. (You will discuss the second set of questions after reading.)

Set a purpose for reading. (5 minutes)

Read the “As You Read” box on page 27. Ask students to define the word *stereotype* and to give examples. Ask, are stereotypes fair? How can they be harmful?

2 Reading the Story

Read, discuss, mark. (25 minutes)

- Read “Girls Can't Play!” once as a class.
- Break students into groups to read it again, pausing to discuss the close-reading questions in the margins.
- Have each group come up with its own close-reading question to discuss with the whole class.

Answers to Close-Reading Questions

▶ **Inference** (p. 27) *You can infer that the mitt is soft and worn because it has been used for a long time and has been well loved. The phrases suggest that the mitt makes the narrator feel comforted and happy.*

▶ **Word Choice** (p. 27) *Hangdog means sad or depressed. Other old-fashioned words and phrases include: darned good, gal, real moxie, boy oh boy, crank on an ice cream churn, girlie, and killer-diller.*

▶ **Inference** (p. 28) *The game would make the people of Chattanooga feel important and energized to have a major-league team come to their city. It might also provide a welcome distraction from the brutal realities of the Great Depression.*

▶ **Genre** (p. 28) *It helps us understand how a young woman's extraordinary achievement in baseball affected a young girl and the people around her.*

▶ **Character** (p. 28) *This tells us that Hazel still feels stung that Timmy didn't let her play, and she is*

getting pleasure out of making him keep up with her.

▶ **Characterization** (p. 29) *It suggests that Timmy is messy and doesn't have great manners. He hems and haws about what to buy, without acknowledging that Hazel doesn't have money to buy anything. He doesn't offer to share, which shows that he may be selfish.*

▶ **Word Choice** (p. 29) *The word flanked suggests that the men are escorting and guarding Jackie. A phrase like "walking between" would not indicate Jackie's importance or the momentousness of the occasion.*

▶ **Inference** (p. 29) *As a huge fan of baseball, Hazel is awestruck by the sight of Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig. You can tell by the way she gasps and points to the field.*

▶ **Compare and Contrast** (p. 30) *Jackie poses for pictures and playfully powders her nose. She is "cool as a cucumber" when she stands on the mound. She smiles, waves, and blows a kiss to the crowd. She behaves with good humor, grace, and dignity. Babe Ruth, on the other hand, can't believe a girl struck him out. He looks "huffy" and flings his bat "in anger and disgust." Ruth does not behave respectfully.*

▶ **Plot** (p. 30) *Timmy realizes that girls can be great at baseball and should be allowed to play. He stands up for Hazel when his friends want her to leave, so Hazel finally gets to play ball.*

3 Reading the Essay

(7 minutes, activity sheet online)

Divide students into groups to read the essay. Then discuss the close-reading question as a class.

Close-Reading Question

▶ **The author states that some experts predict a woman will play on a Major League Baseball team one day soon. What evidence does she give to support that prediction?** (supporting evidence) *The author describes the great success of Mo'ne Davis at the Little*

League World Series last year. She also mentions Justine Siegal, who was the first woman to pitch during batting practice for an MLB team. These recent examples show females being more accepted into the sport.

4 Integrating Ideas

Critical-Thinking Questions

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

As a class, discuss the after-reading **Video Discussion Questions**, which challenge students to connect the video and the texts. Then discuss the questions below in groups.

▶ **In her essay, Shotz states that the first woman who plays on a Major League Baseball team will have a major impact "far beyond, even, the sport of baseball." What does she mean?** *She means other girls and women*

will inspired to pursue their dreams, even if they have been told they can't do something. Putting a female athlete on an MLB team will be an endorsement of the strength, tenacity, and skill of women. It will be a way of saying women and men are equals.

▶ **What is a role model? How are Jackie Mitchell and Mo'ne Davis role models?** *A role model is a person looked to by others as an example to be emulated. Jackie Mitchell and Mo'ne Davis are both role models for anyone who has been told they are less than someone else or that they can't do something.*

5 Skill Building

Featured Skill: Making Inferences

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

Distribute our Core Skills activity sheet on **Making Inferences**. This activity will prepare students for the writing prompt on page 31.

TIP! Go to Scope Online to read historical accounts about Jackie Mitchell and her famous pitch. Discuss how author Rebecca Behrens used primary documents to inform her story.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What does it mean to defy expectations?
.....

How can stereotypes be harmful?

Differentiation

For Struggling Readers

Why did Jackie Mitchell, Mo'ne Davis, and Justine Siegal make headlines? Explain in a well-organized paragraph. Use details from the fiction and essay to support your answer.

For Advanced Readers

Read “Ruth Will Face Girl Pitcher Today; Home Run King Alarmed by Prospect,” from *The New York Times*, April 1, 1931 (available at Scope Online). Compare how events are portrayed in “Girls Can’t Play!” and the newspaper article.

Complexity Factors

See how these texts will challenge your students.

Levels of Meaning/Purpose: On one level, the story recounts a historical event; on another, it imagines the effect of that event on fictional characters. The informational essay explores why women should play baseball.

Structure: The story is mainly chronological but includes brief flashbacks. The essay uses narrative and informational passages.

Language Conventionalilty and Clarity:

- **Vocabulary:** old-fashioned vernacular (*moxie*, *snit*)
- **Figurative language:** numerous similes (“people jumped up and down like popcorn”), metaphors (“melted into a puddle of nerves”), figures of speech, and rhetorical questions

Knowledge Demands: Prior knowledge of the Great Depression and of baseball’s rules and terminology will aid comprehension.

Lexile: 910L (story); 1090L (essay)

Literature Connections

Other texts that explore women’s equality:

- *Catherine, Called Birdy* by Karen Cushman
- *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott
- “The Struggle for Human Rights” by Eleanor Roosevelt (speech)

ONLINE RESOURCES

VIDEO: “Time Machine: the 1930s”

ACTIVITIES TO PRINT OR PROJECT:

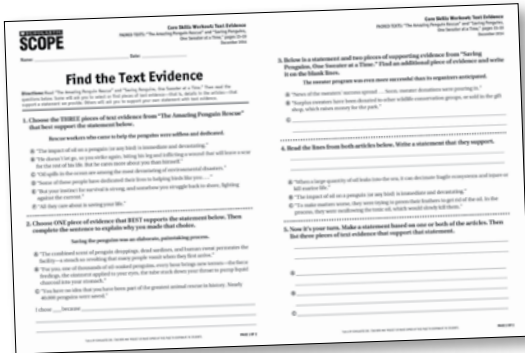
- Close-Reading and Critical-Thinking Questions*
- Video Discussion Questions*
- DIY Vocabulary
- Literary Elements
- Quiz (two levels)
- Contest Entry Form
- Core Skill: Making Inferences*

*Supports the lesson plan

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Spotlight on Text Evidence

Don't Miss This Great Activity!



Don't miss our text evidence activity—one of the eight Core Skills activities you get with every issue of *Scope*. It walks your students through a scaffolded process that begins with selecting text evidence that best supports a statement, and culminates in students writing their own statements and supporting them with text evidence they find on their own.

Along the way, students go beyond mere identification to analysis: They are asked to explain their choices—that is, to articulate how a piece of evidence supports an idea.

If you haven't used this activity with your students, we encourage you to try it out. As testing season looms nearer, now is the perfect time to reinforce this essential skill.

For more on our Core Skills Workout, go to Scope Online and click "Core Skills" from the menu bar.

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