

Badlands

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Book Summary

A meteorite has collided with Earth, and Krystal and a small group of survivors are living in a subway station. This futuristic story explores themes of trust, community, and survival.

Features of the Book

- Dramatic illustrations
- Futuristic setting
- Suspense
- Character development

Purpose

Badlands can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills and understandings:

- S** analysing how changes in the environment affect people;
- S** analysing theme;
- S** making inferences.

Investigation Tools

- Digging Deeper – Meteors and Meteorites, page 29
- Step by Step – Meteorite Strike, pages 30–31
- Weighing Both Sides – All for One and One for All, page 32

The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Analysing how changes in the environment affect people
- S** Analysing theme

Introducing the text

Ask the students if they've ever seen a shooting star.

- *What causes shooting stars?*

Read aloud “Meteors and Meteorites” on page 29.

- *What would happen if a large meteorite collided with Earth?*

Ask the students to compare their predictions with the information in “Meteorite Strike” on pages 30 and 31.

- *How would it affect people?*
- *What could people do to survive such a disaster?*

Encourage the students to imagine how the survivors might behave.

- *Would people change the way they treat one another? Why/why not?*

Discuss the qualities and characteristics that would be important for survival (teamwork, adaptability, co-operation, ingenuity, sharing).

- *Do you think a crisis brings out the best or worst qualities in people? Why?*

Reading and discussing the text

Ask the students to read chapters 1 and 2, looking for the qualities the characters value and clues to the “big ideas” (themes) in the story.

- *What qualities does the community value? (honesty, trustworthiness)*
- *What is trust? Why would it be so important?*

Ask the students to find the paragraph that describes why Paul was expelled from the community (page 6: “Krystal looked away . . .”).

- *What motivated Krystal to help Paul? (compassion)*
- *Why might the community value honesty and trustworthiness more than compassion?*

Discuss the idea of community.

- *What makes a community strong?*
- *Why would being part of a community be important?*
- *What might it mean to be excluded?*

Ask the students to predict what will happen next, then read chapter 3 to find out how Krystal is affected.

- *What qualities do Paul and Krystal demonstrate?*
- *What values might they build a community around? (teamwork, sharing)*

Remind the students about the possible effects of a meteorite strike. Now ask them to read chapter 4, looking for how the author included this information.

- *What effects are suggested in the story?*
- *What clues does the author provide about the health risks and environmental hazards? (Paul's cough, smoke, no signs of life)*

Ask the students to read to the end of the story. Encourage them to think about the “big ideas” (themes) as they read.

- *What was the point of Brogan's character? What values were her actions based on?*
- *What values are demonstrated by Troy? By Krystal?*
- *What is the author's message about community?*
- *What is the author trying to say in the last exchange between Paul and Krystal?*

Ask the students to read “All for One and One for All” on page 32.

- *How did the author convey this message in the story?*

Revisiting the Text

The activities below can be used immediately after the guided reading lesson, during later reading sessions as mini-lessons, or as independent activities.

S Making inferences

Discuss the different responses to finding the storeroom. (Paul wants to keep it a secret, but Krystal disagrees.) Ask the students to debate the following statement: “Krystal and Paul should keep the storeroom a secret.” Encourage them to think of arguments for and against by making inferences about the future. Invite them to consider the consequences of both actions.

They can record their thoughts on the blackline master on page 65.

S Analysing how changes in the environment affect people

Ask the students to review the effects of a meteorite strike on pages 30 and 31. Ask them to work in pairs to create a plan to survive such a disaster. They can use the Step by Step investigation tool on page 91 to record their ideas.

