



Earth and Water and Sky

1 It was a long hike through the woods to the Thinking Pond, but David Brenner didn't mind. He'd been going there for three years, ever since he was ten and had found the lonely, stream-fed pool while exploring one summer afternoon. He liked to spend time there more than he liked doing almost anything else.

2 David walked toward the Thinking Pond. Suddenly he heard a sharp, whining sound like the engine of a highflying jet airplane. It was followed by a *crack!* like a whip being snapped, only a thousand times louder. Then a ball of fire roared overhead, followed by a searing gust of wind.

3 The shock wave knocked David to the ground, his ears ringing. A second later, he heard an explosive, hissing crash up ahead. A rush of air and hot steam billowed through the trees, and he covered his head as it washed over him.

4 After several minutes, David looked up. The warm, wet mist had dispersed, leaving the woods damp and sparkling with little droplets of water.

5 What in the world just happened?! He wondered as he got to his feet. Cautiously but curiously, he headed in the direction of the Thinking Pond. By now David could usually see the shine of sunlight on the gently rippling water, but today something was different. Covering the last hundred metres quickly, David stopped at the edge of the meadow where the pond lay.

6 "Whoa!" he said in amazement. Before him stretched a dry, cracked-mud crater, all that was left of the Thinking Pond. The water in the fifteen-metre diameter pool had evaporated, leaving a huge hole in the forest floor. The baked mud rippled out from the centre in wide, shallow waves. In the middle of the crater, half-buried in the ground, was a rounded, melted lump of something that looked like a rock. It was a little larger than a basketball.

"I can't believe it!" David whispered, awe-struck. "It's a meteorite." 7



David cautiously stepped out onto the dried mud. "Ugh!" he said as his high-top shoe broke through the thin crust and sank into the wet gunk underneath. He picked his way carefully over to the meteorite, struggling to keep his balance when the dried mud gave way too quickly beneath his feet. 8

He stopped one or two metres away from the chunk of space rock, which was now giving off a faint sizzling noise. Reaching down, David picked up a small 9

gob of mud oozing around his shoes. He flicked it onto the meteorite's rough surface. The wet dirt hissed and popped, then dried and stuck. The meteorite was definitely too hot to touch.

David could hardly believe he was looking at something that had been flying through space only a few minutes before. He wondered where the meteorite had come from. Maybe an asteroid or a comet had passed too close to a planet or the sun, and a chunk had been pulled off by gravity. Maybe it had been floating through space for millions of years before earth's gravitational field had caught it and dragged it in. 10

Lost in wonder, David studied the meteorite. He became aware of a small gurgling sound just as something wet touched his ankle. Looking down, David saw a trickle of water had rolled down the sloping side of the crater. The shallow creek that fed into the pond had been blocked off by the dirt pushed up at the crater's rim. Now the water had backed up enough so it was flowing over the edge and refilling the pond. 11

The little river of cool water ran down into the crater until it touched the meteorite. At first the rock hissed and turned the water into steam. But soon its heat was used up, and slowly, the growing pool of clear liquid began to cover up the meteorite. 12

David reached into the water and put his hand on the slick rock. It still felt a little warm. He thought about trying to carry it out but figured it was probably too heavy. Standing up, he carefully made his way back to the edge of the crater. 13

David sat on the ground beside the Thinking Pond and watched as the water slowly refilled the hole. It was getting dark when he finally got up to head back home. He could faintly see the meteorite in the darkening water, which was still rising. When he'd come here tomorrow, the rock would be under three metres of water, and he probably wouldn't even be able to see it at all. 14

As he walked home through the woods, David hoped that nobody would come looking for the meteorite. Probably no one knew that part of it had survived its fiery journey through the earth's atmosphere. He hoped that the meteorite would stay at the bottom of the Thinking Pond forever, in a place where the earth, the water, and a piece of the sky all touched each other. 15



Grade 6 Reading: Earth and Water and Sky

- 1. Explain why David likes to visit the Thinking Pond. Use details from the text and your own ideas to support your answer.**

- 2. Explain whether paragraphs 14 and 15 provide an effective ending. Support your answer using specific details from the text.**
