

The Scrapper Discussion Questions and Activities

PREVIEWING THE TEXT

Look at the front-cover picture, the title, and the synopsis (plot summary) on the back cover. Make a **prediction** about what the book will be about. What do you think you'll like about this book?

PROLOGUE

1) SETTING

The **setting** is when and where a story takes place. After reading the prologue, complete the below setting graphic organizer.

TIME	PLACE
Year?	City and state?
Season (How do you know?)	

2) CHANGE IN MOOD

Mood is the atmosphere or feeling that a literary work conveys to the reader. Word choice, description, and conflict can help create a particular mood. For example, if I read a story that described the howling wind, the darkening sky, and a distant ear-splitting scream, I could infer that the mood was suspenseful or scary.

Mood in First Paragraph of Prologue:	Mood in Second Paragraph in Prologue:
Text Clues:	Text Clues:

Draw a picture demonstrating the mood in the first paragraph. Use appropriate colors that show the mood.

Draw a picture demonstrating the mood in the second paragraph. Use appropriate colors that show the mood.

3) MAKING INFERENCES

An **inference** is a logical guess based on evidence. What can you infer about the narrator so far?

My Inference	Evidence from the Story

4) MAKING CONNECTIONS

How do your real-life desires and worries come out in your dreams?

CHAPTERS 1-3

1) MAKING INFERENCES

What can you infer about the narrator from the first two paragraphs in chapter one?

2) CHECKING COMPREHENSION AND MAKING CONNECTIONS

How does Garrett feel about the riverfront? Do you have a special place you love like Garrett does? Explain.

3) CHARACTER MOTIVATION

What does Garrett want to have one day? Do you have a goal or wish that you hope you'll attain one day? Explain.

4) CAUSE/EFFECT

What event causes Garrett to burst into his house and create a hole in the wall with the doorknob?

5) MAKING INFERENCES

How does Garrett feel about his room? How is Garrett's room a reflection of who he is? Why is Garrett nervous about making noise in his own room?

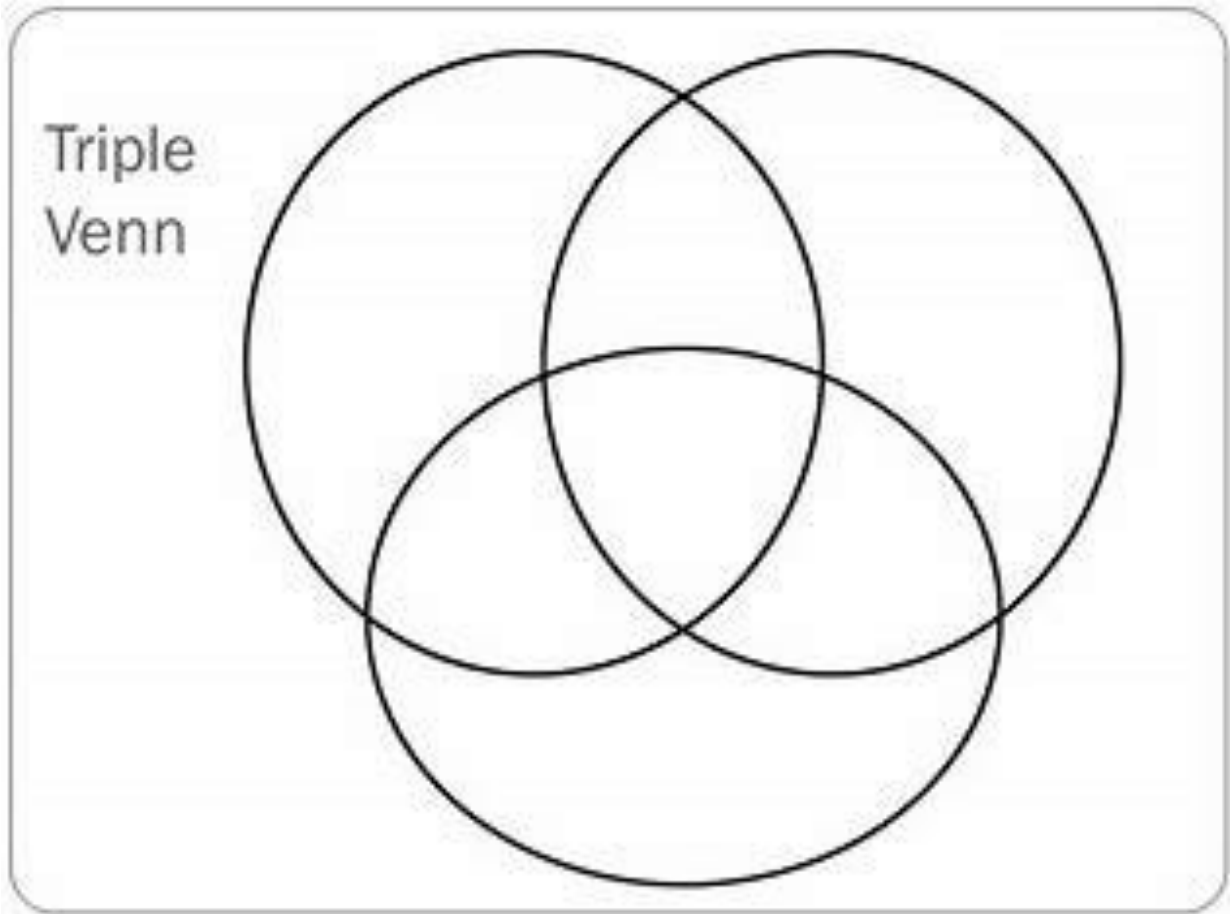
6) COMPARISON/CONTRAST

How is Garrett's mother different from Garrett's father?

GARRETT'S MOTHER	GARRETT'S FATHER

7) COMPARISON/CONTRAST

How are the three brothers (Garrett, Jack, and Brian) similar or different?



8) DRAWING CONCLUSIONS AND MAKING JUDGMENTS

Why does Brian change how he interacts with the family? Do you agree or disagree with his decision? Explain.

CHAPTER 4-6

1) DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

Why do you think Gage appears to Garrett at that particular moment in chapter four?

2) CAUSE/EFFECT

Why does Garrett's father leave?

3) CAUSE/EFFECT

How does the father's departure from the family impact Garrett and the family?

4) DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

Why do you think Garrett secretly watches the Jones family interact?

5) PROBLEM/SOLUTION

What complications does Garrett experience at Joe’s Scrap Yard? How does at least one complication get resolved?

6) DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

Why do you think Scrap is the perfect dog for Garrett to meet?

CHAPTER 7-9

1) DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

What clues might indicate that Scrap is not an average dog?

2) MAKING JUDGMENTS

What do you think about Garrett’s choice to steal? Is his choice justified or not, in your opinion? Explain.

3) MAKING INFERENCES

At the end of chapter eight, why do you think Scrap’s behavior toward Garrett changes?

CHAPTER 10-12

1) PROBLEM/RESOLUTION

Draw a picture of a problem and its resolution (how the problem gets solved). Then describe your picture with a caption below. Share your picture and discuss the significance of the problem-resolution relationship to the overall novel.

PROBLEM	RESOLUTION
CAPTION:	CAPTION:

2) DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

Why do you think it's so important to Scrap to pay for her ticket, though she could ride for free if she remained hidden in Garrett's jacket? How could this scene contribute to one possible theme, or message, in the book?

3) DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

Why do you think Garrett's father changed temperaments from when his kids were younger? Why do you think Garrett's father wants his children to be football stars?

4) DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

How does chapter twelve show how Scrap has impacted Garrett?

EPILOGUE

1) DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

Do you think there's a reason why Garrett's life path took him to the New York Stock Exchange first, though he decides not to stay there? Explain. Have *you* ever had to do something that wasn't meant for you, but you had to go through that experience to discover and appreciate what you really wanted to do? How so?

2) DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

At the New York Stock Exchange, Garrett could earn a lot of money and be close to his father's cousin, who would support him financially. He could also follow in his father's footsteps back when his father was successful. Why do you think Garrett chooses to leave the Exchange instead in the end? Why do you think Garrett chooses to have Old Joe be a father figure to him instead of Sean P. Murphy, his father's cousin?

3) CHECKING COMPREHENSION

What did Garrett learn from Scrap's interaction with Pretty Boy the Rottweiler? How does he apply what he learned to his life?

4) MAKING CONNECTIONS AND JUDGMENTS

Would you have chosen to stay at the New York Stock Exchange to make lots of money if you had a family that struggled for so many years? Or would you have chosen to follow your original dream of starting a dive-equipment repair shop and owning your own boat, though you'd make less money and have to work much harder? Explain your reasoning.

5) THEME

Earlier in the book, Garrett steals from the scrap yard, junkyard, and hardware store; he also hides Scrap on the train, though he knows Scrap wouldn't be allowed. Then, because of

a family connection, Garrett gets to take a job making easy money at the New York Stock Exchange, though his real talent is fixing things. What message is the author sending about honesty, hard work, and following your own life's path? Explain.

6) DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

Why do you think Garrett's dreams about hitting ice didn't stop when he was working at the Exchange, though working at the Exchange is like achieving the "American dream" to many people? In your opinion, why did the nightmares finally stop by the end of the novel?

7) COMPARE/CONTRAST AND MAKING JUDGMENTS

Different characters in *The Scrapper* have varied definitions of happiness and fulfillment. For each character below, state what makes that character happy. Put a check if you agree with that character's definition of happiness.

CHARACTER	WHAT MAKES THAT CHARACTER HAPPY OR FULFILLED?	CHECK IF YOU AGREE
Garrett		
Brian		
Jack		
Garrett's father		
Garrett's mother		
Jones family		
José		
Old Joe		
Sean P. Murphy		
Scrap		

8) EXTENSION

If you could write an alternate ending for the book, what ending would *you* choose and why?