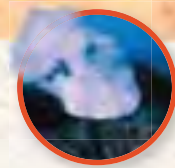
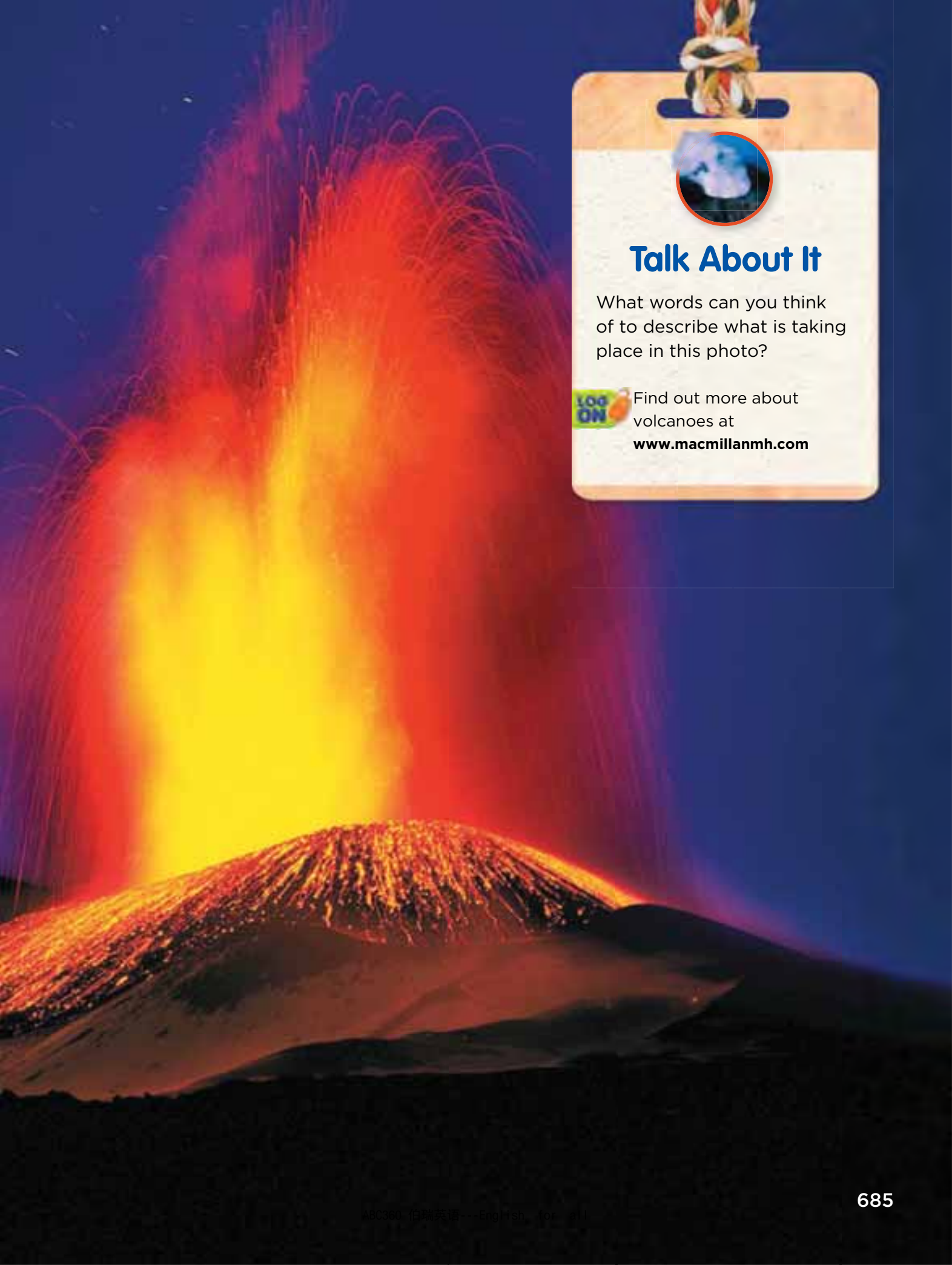


# VOLCANOES PAST AND PRESENT



## Talk About It

What words can you think of to describe what is taking place in this photo?



Find out more about volcanoes at

[www.macmillanmh.com](http://www.macmillanmh.com)



# Voice from Vesuvius

by Isabel Kamsky

Tammi and Brian are in southern Italy with their parents. Their mother is an archaeologist, and their father heads a computer graphics company. Both are working at the excavations of Herculaneum on the Bay of Naples. It is an impressive, **ambitious** project.

The hot sun was making Tammi and Brian tired and **drowsy**. They had spent the morning watching a computer-generated exhibit of Herculaneum in A.D. 79 that their dad made. Now they decided to **loung** on the ground at the archaeological site itself.

“Just think,” said Brian, “about sixty-five feet of matter from Mt. Vesuvius fell on this city. That’s much more than covered Pompeii.”

## Vocabulary

<b>ambitious</b>	<b>revived</b>
<b>drowsy</b>	<b>dwelling</b>
<b>loung</b>	<b>pondering</b>
<b>agonized</b>	<b>vapors</b>

## Dictionary

Many words have more than one meaning. Dictionaries define **Multiple-meaning Words**.

For example:

<sup>1</sup> *loung* (verb) = to pass time lazily

<sup>2</sup> *loung* (noun) = a room for lounging or being at ease

<sup>3</sup> *loung* (noun) = a couch or sofa



(left) Vestibule of a Thermae at Herculaneum

“Mom says that when it cooled, the volcanic ash covered the city like cement,” added Tammi. “That’s why things have been so well-preserved all these years.”

“It was horrifying,” said an **agonized** voice that sounded as if it were in pain.

Startled, the children turned to see who was speaking. No one was there. Suddenly, they were **revived** and wide awake. Was the voice coming from the ancient home in front of them?

“Some said the gods were punishing us,” the voice said. “Is that what it was?”

Tammi peered into the **dwelling**, but the house was empty. Still she felt she should answer.

“I know people believed that,” she said, “but it was really the volcano erupting. You know, Mt. Vesuvius.”

“But why?” asked the voice.

“There’s a scientific explanation,”

said Brian. “Earth is covered with large plates. They are always moving. When one plate pushes under another, it melts and becomes liquid rock called *magma*. This super hot rock creates gas and steam. Then it can burst through Earth’s surface as a volcano. Mt. Vesuvius has erupted more than seventy times since Herculaneum and Pompeii were covered in A.D. 79.”

For a minute there was silence. Brian’s scientific explanation required some **pondering**, or thinking about.

“There was so much ash, rock, and fumes. The **vapors** killed people as they ran for the sea,” said the voice sadly.

“Er . . . you speak as if you were there,” said Tammi.

“Yes, I was there . . . it was my fate.” The voice trailed off, “I will always be there . . .”

The children looked at one another. “It must be the sun,” gasped Tammi. “Let’s go find Mom and Dad.”

## Reread for Comprehension

### Summarize

#### Theme

When you summarize what you read, it is helpful to identify the theme, or subject, of the story. Ask yourself how all the parts of the story relate to the theme.

A Theme Chart can help you summarize a story. Use the chart to identify the theme as you reread “Voice from Vesuvius.”

Setting
What the Characters Want
Plot Problem
Outcome
Theme