

I Wonder Why

Spenser and the ROCKS

By **Lawrence F. Lowery**

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National Science Teachers Association

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By **Lawrence F. Lowery**
Illustrated By **June Goldsborough**





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Spenser and the rocks / by Lawrence F. Lowery ; illustrated by June Goldsborough.

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Summary: “Spenser and the rocks is part of the I Wonder Why book series, written to ignite the curiosity of children in grades K-6 while encouraging them to become avid readers. In addition to the information pertaining to rocks, the heart of the story is a young boy named Spenser and his interests, curiosity, and thoughts. Through the story, the reader is introduced to scientific procedures such as classification, research, and reclassification. Spenser’s interest in rocks increases as he learns more about them by sorting the rocks, asking questions, and reading reference books”--Provided by publisher.

Audience: K to grade 3.

ISBN 978-1-938946-11-0 -- ISBN 978-1-938946-73-8 (e-book) 1. Rocks--Juvenile literature. 2. Rocks--Classification--Juvenile literature. I. Goldsborough, June, illustrator. II. National Science Teachers Association. III. Title.

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Introduction

The *I Wonder Why* books are science books created specifically for young learners who are in their first years of school. The content for each book was chosen to be appropriate for youngsters

who are beginning to construct knowledge of the world around them. These youngsters ask questions. They want to know about things. They are more curious than they will be when they are a decade older. Research shows that science is students’ favorite subject when they enter school for the first time.

Science is both *what* we know and *how* we come to know it. What we know is the content knowledge that accumulates over time as scientists continue to explore the universe in which we live. How we come to know science is the set of thinking and reasoning processes we use to get answers to the questions and inquiries in which we are engaged.

Scientists learn by observing, comparing, and organizing the objects and ideas they are investigating. Children learn the same way. These thinking processes are among several inquiry behaviors that enable us to find out about our world and how it works. Observing, comparing, and organizing are fundamental to the more advanced thinking processes of relating, experimenting, and inferring.

The five books in this set of the *I Wonder Why* series focus on Earth science content. The materials of our Earth are mostly in the forms of solids (rocks and minerals), liquids (water), and gases (air). Inquiries about these materials are initiated by curiosity. When we don’t know something about an area of interest, we try to understand it by asking questions and doing investigations. These five Earth science books are written from the learner’s point of view: *How Does the Wind Blow?*; *Clouds, Rain, Clouds Again*; *Spenser*

and the Rocks; *Environments of Our Earth*; and *Up, Up in a Balloon*. Children inquire about pebbles and rocks, rain and wind, and jungles and deserts. Their curiosity leads them to ask questions about land forms, weather, and climate.

The information in these books leads the characters and the reader to discover how wind can be measured and how powerful it can be, how the water cycle works, that living things need water to survive, and that plants and animals have adapted to different climate-related environments. They also learn how people have learned to fly in the ocean of air that surrounds Earth.

Each book uses a different approach to take the reader through simple scientific information. One book is expository, providing factual information. Several are narratives that allow a story to unfold. Another provides a historical perspective that tells how we gradually learn science through experiments over time. The combination of different artwork, literary perspectives, and scientific knowledge brings the content to the reader through several instructional avenues.

In addition, the content in these books correlates to criteria set forth by national standards. Often the content is woven into each book so that its presence is subtle but powerful. The science activities in the Parent/Teacher Handbook section in each book enable learners to carry out their own investigations that relate to the content of the book. The materials needed for these activities are easily obtained, and the activities have been tested with youngsters to be sure they are age appropriate.

After students have completed a science activity, rereading or referring back to the book and talking about connections with the activity can be a deepening experience that stabilizes the learning as a long-term memory.



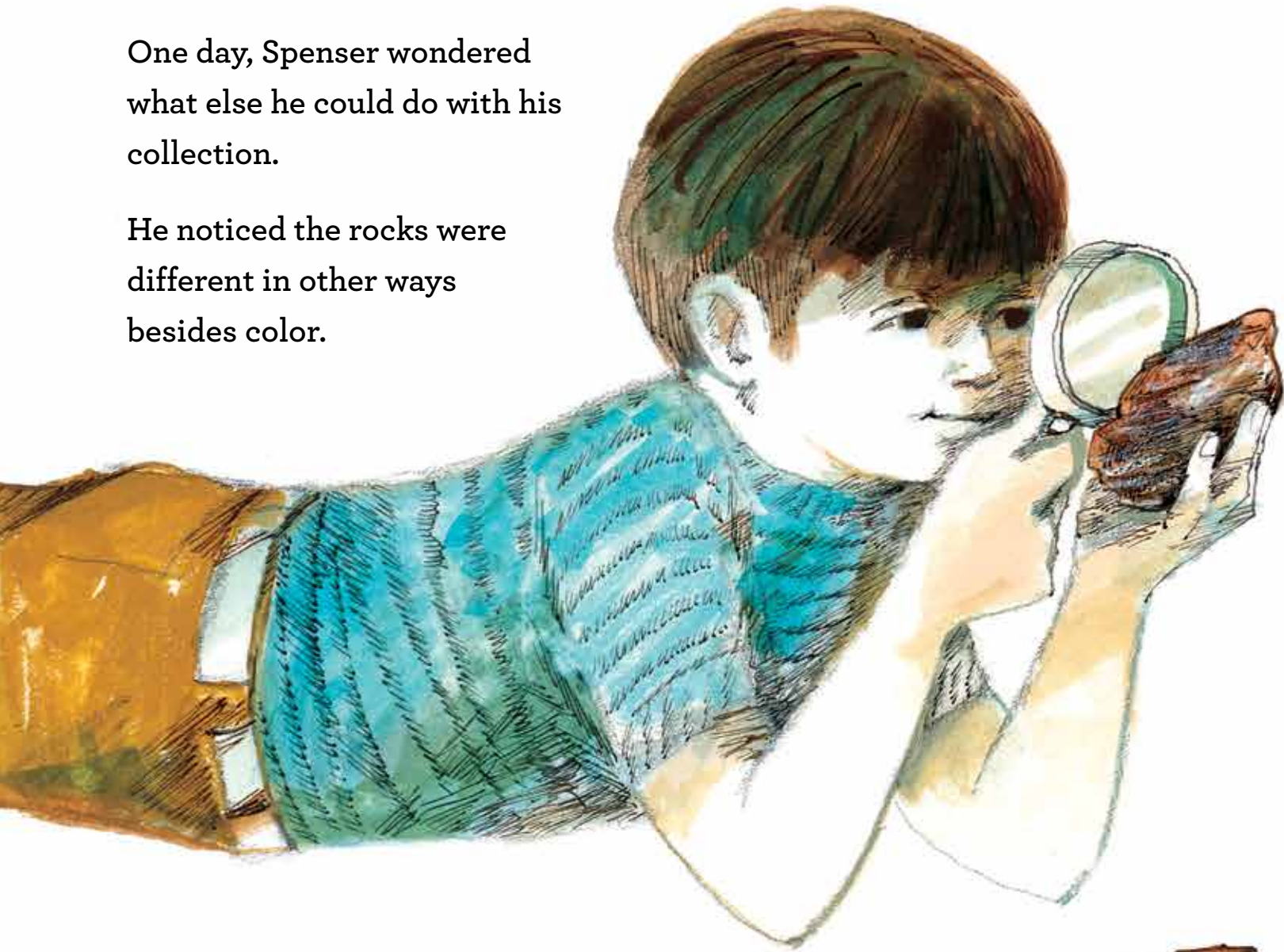
Spenser's collection became bigger and bigger. Soon he had rocks all over his room. Spenser enjoyed arranging his rocks.

He put all the red rocks together, all the black together, all the gray together, all the pink together, and all the white together.

He said to himself, "What a great collection!"

One day, Spenser wondered what else he could do with his collection.

He noticed the rocks were different in other ways besides color.



Some were rough.



Some were smooth.



Some were hard.



Some were soft.



Some were heavy, and some were light.



Some were dull.



Some were bright.



Spenser arranged his collection in many new ways.



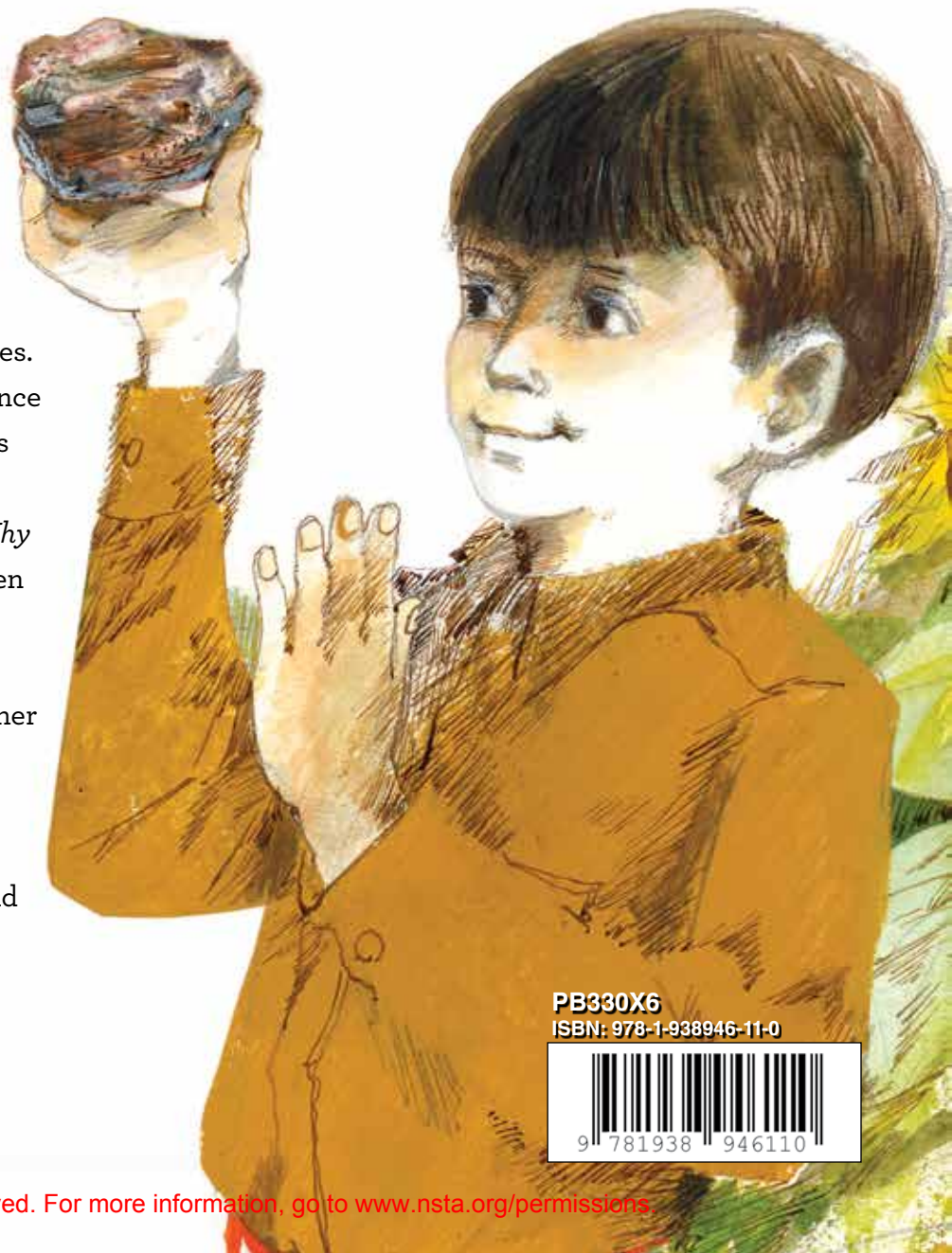
Spenser and the ROCKS

As he begins to discover the interesting rocks all around him, Spenser has many questions about what he finds. Given the differences in the rocks' colors, sizes, shapes, and textures, there is much to learn about rocks! But that's not all the curious child learns in this tale of discovery. Spenser's fascination grows as he sorts and re-sorts his rock collection and asks questions about what he observes. For Spenser—as well as young readers—the experience is an engaging introduction to scientific procedures such as classification and research.

Spenser and the Rocks is part of the *I Wonder Why* book series, written to ignite the curiosity of children in grades K–6 while encouraging them to become avid readers. These books explore the marvels of geology, land forms, weather, environments, and other phenomena related to science and nature. Included in each volume is a Parent/Teacher Handbook with coordinating activities. The *I Wonder Why* series is written by an award-winning science educator and published by NSTA Kids, a division of NSTA Press.

Grades K–6

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