

LEVELED Book • L

Ghost Towns

MULTI
level
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Written by Kira Freed

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Ghost Towns



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Focus Question

What is a ghost town? How does a town become a ghost town?

Words to Know

diamond
erupted
landslides

nuclear power plant
radiation
resource

Page 3: A city in Turkey became a ghost town after a war between Greece and Turkey. After Greece lost the war, Greek people in the city had to leave.

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Bannack, Montana, is a ghost town and a state park that people can visit.

A Deserted Town

Ghost towns are empty places where people once lived. People often leave these towns because of some threat or because they can no longer find work. Each town has a story to tell.

Ghost Towns Around the World



Kayakoy, Turkey, page ❸

Bannack, Montana, page ❹

Kolmanskop (KOHL-mun-skop),
Namibia, page ❻

Grytviken (GRIT-vee-kuhn),
South Georgia, page ❷

Plymouth, Montserrat
(mon-sur-RAT), page ❸

Craco, Italy, page ❾

Centralia, Pennsylvania, page ❽

Okuma, Japan, page ❿ (main)

Pripyat, Ukraine, page ❽ (sidebar)

St. Kilda, Scotland, page ❾

Ordos, China, page ❿

Villa Epecuen (VEE-yuh e-pe-
KWEN), Argentina, page ❾

As shown on the map above, empty towns are found around the world. Imagine what life was like for the people who lived in these places. Why do people leave these towns?



Germans built the town after someone found a diamond (top). Today, the buildings are full of sand (bottom).

Resources Vanish

Sometimes people leave a town after they run out of a **resource**. In 1908, a **diamond** was found in a desert in Africa. Soon after, a new town was born. Everyone left when the diamonds became hard to find.



Penguins, seals, and other animals now live on the island.

In the 1900s, many people hunted whales around this island. Whales became harder to find over time. Then people stopped hunting whales. People left the town. Old buildings and boats are still there.



Eruptions still happen on the island (top). Many areas are now covered in ash (bottom).

Forces of Nature

Some places become ghost towns because of natural events. In 1995, a volcano **erupted** on this Caribbean island. The capital city was almost destroyed. Over half the people who lived on the island have left. The volcano is still active today.



This amazing, empty village has been used in a few movies.

A ghost town in Italy sits on a tall cliff. People in the village left because of earthquakes and **landslides**. In the 1960s and 1970s, landslides almost destroyed the whole village. The people who still lived there moved away.

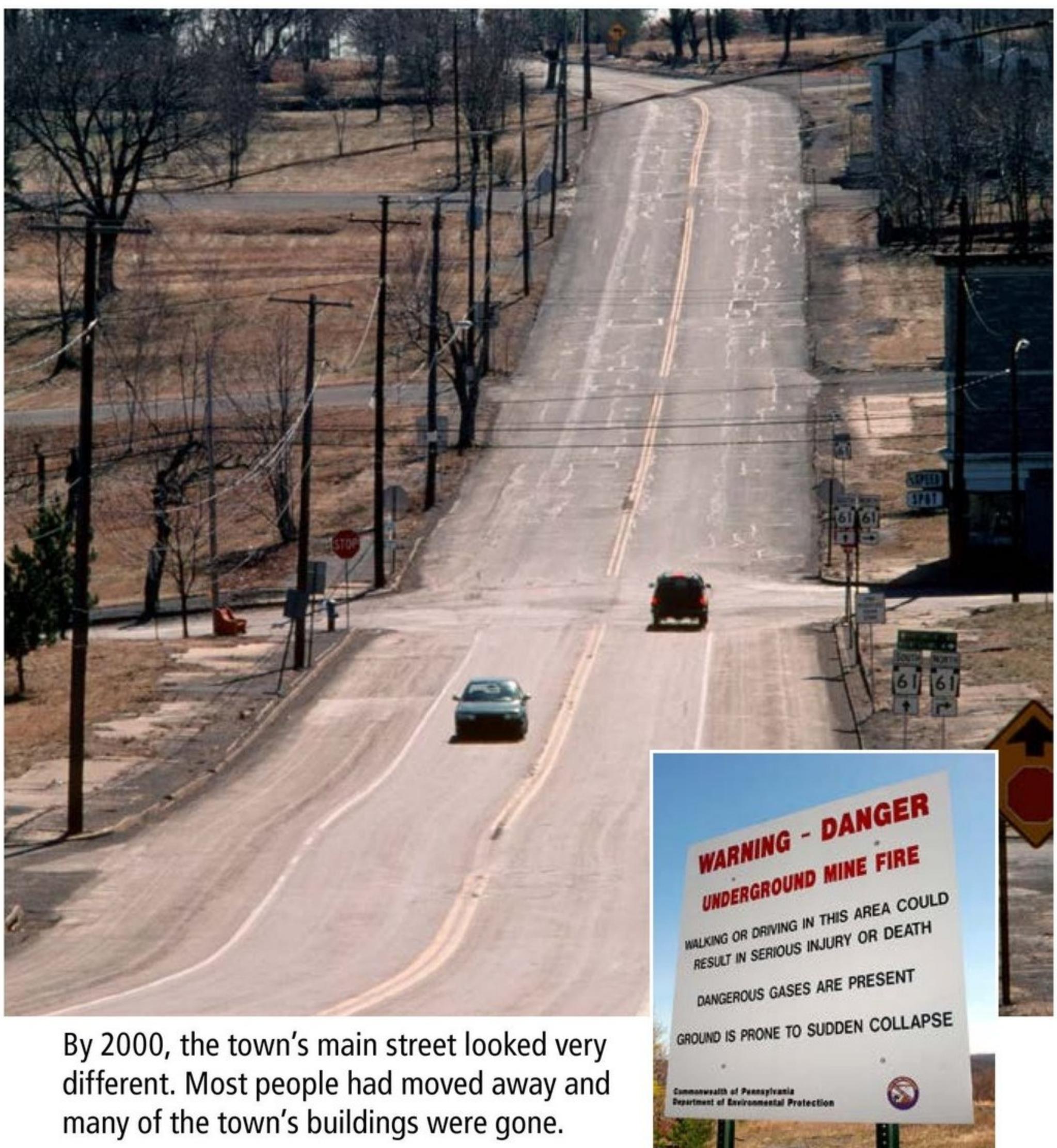


In 1983, people still lived in the Pennsylvania town. The main street looked the same as before the fire.

Deadly Land

People leave some places after the land turns deadly. A town in Pennsylvania is almost completely empty. One day in 1962, the town dump was set on fire to clean up for a holiday. The fire spread into the old mines below the dump, and no one could stop it.

After many years, the fire started to burn under the town. Deadly gas went into people's homes, and holes opened up in the ground. Almost everyone left. The fire will burn for a long time.



By 2000, the town's main street looked very different. Most people had moved away and many of the town's buildings were gone.



This area of the town is still filled with radiation. People cannot go there.

Water can be as deadly as fire. A large earthquake hit off the coast of Japan in March 2011. The earthquake caused huge waves that hit a **nuclear power plant**. Harmful **radiation** filled the air. Thousands of people had to move away. No one knows when—or if—anyone can go back.



Chernobyl Disaster

Japan isn't the only country with a ghost town caused by a nuclear accident. A city in Ukraine was home to the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant's workers and their families. People left the city after a deadly nuclear accident in 1986.



This group of islands is now home to about 680,000 seabirds.

A Hard Way of Life

People leave some places because they are too hard to get to. In this group of small islands, people couldn't grow enough food or heat their homes. Young people moved away. Others died because of poor health or old age. The last people moved away in 1930.



This city is still being built, even though no one is moving there.

A Brand-New Ghost Town

Most ghost towns are not empty from the start. People found coal in an area of China in the early 2000s. A city was built nearby, and people were expected to move there. The new city has always been empty. It is the world's largest ghost town.



After a bad storm and a flood, a town in Argentina was underwater for years. It is now a ghost town.

Empty Places

Ghost towns can be old or new, and they are created in many different ways. However, they all have one thing in common: they are lonely places with secrets to share.

Think About It

Think about cities and towns you have lived in or visited. Hundreds of years from now, some of these places may be ghost towns. What might happen to make people leave?

Glossary

diamond (<i>n.</i>)	a rare, precious stone that is prized for its hardness and beauty (p. 6)
erupted (<i>v.</i>)	shot out material such as rock, lava, and ash from an active volcano (p. 8)
landslides (<i>n.</i>)	moving masses of soil and rock that flow down slopes (p. 9)
nuclear power plant (<i>n.</i>)	a building or group of buildings that use atomic energy to make electricity for an area or region (p. 12)
radiation (<i>n.</i>)	a dangerous and powerful form of energy (p. 12)
resource (<i>n.</i>)	a supply of something valuable or very useful (p. 6)

Ghost Towns

A Reading A-Z Level L Leveled Book

Word Count: 478

Connections

Writing and Art

Create an imaginary ghost town. Give it a name and a location on a map, then write a story about how it became a ghost town. Share your ghost town with your class.

Social Studies

Choose two of the ghost towns from the book. Compare and contrast the towns using a Venn diagram. Share your Venn diagram with a partner.

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