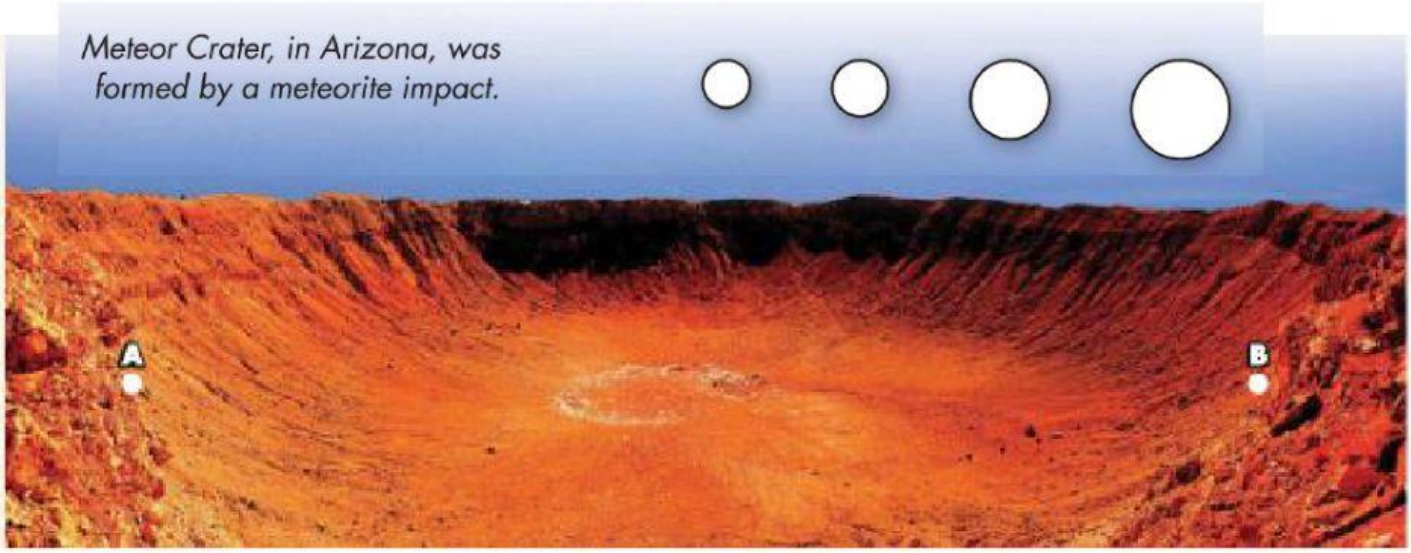
Meteors

Have you ever seen a shooting star? Shooting stars look like bright lines of fast-moving light that form in the night sky. They last a very short time. Shooting stars are not really stars but meteors.

A **meteor** forms when a meteoroid hits Earth's atmosphere. A **meteoroid** is a small piece of rock moving in space. Meteoroids are boulder-sized or smaller. Most are the size of pebbles or grains of sand. When a meteoroid shoots through the air, it heats up quickly. It gets so hot that it glows as a streak of light. Very bright meteors are called fireballs. Most meteors burn up before they hit Earth's surface. If a meteor does not burn up completely, it may fall to Earth. A piece of a meteor that lands on Earth is called a **meteorite**. Most meteorites are quite small. The biggest known meteorite is in Namibia, Africa, and weighs 60 tons.

Look the picture and calculate the size of the meteor. Put an X on the circle that best represents the probable size of the meteor.

The diameter of this crater may be 24 times larger than the diameter of the meteor that formed it. Measure the crater from point A to point B.



Meteor Crater, in Arizona, was formed by a meteorite impact.