

LITERATURE 4B

TEACHER'S NOTES

AUTHOR	H. G. Wells
TITLE	<i>The Time Machine</i> (Chapters 2 & 5)
THEMES	Human activity vs. nature, geographical features
WRITING	A pros and cons essay
THINK STYLE	The narrator

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Herbert George Wells (1866–1946) was born in Kent in England. Life wasn't easy for him and he experienced poverty at times. He was an apprentice on a low wage before he got a scholarship to study biology at university. He then became a teacher. He wrote both fiction and non-fiction, including books about history, politics and social issues. He was interested in different social classes in England and wrote about the poor. At one point, he was compared to Charles Dickens because of his writing about social classes and poverty. Some of his novels contained his view of a perfect society.

He is most famous for his science fiction novels. In 1940, one of his novels, *The War of the Worlds*, appeared on the radio. People didn't realise that it was a radio drama and really thought that aliens had invaded earth. He was awarded the *Nobel Prize in Literature* four times.

INTRODUCTION

Ask students if they have heard of H. G. Wells or *The Time Machine*. They may have seen or heard of the *War of the Worlds* or *The Time Machine* films which were based on his novels. Write any ideas on the board in note form. Use the information in the *About the author* box to provide an introduction. Depending on the class, it may be appropriate to use L1 at this stage.

START THINKING ...

- 1 Organise the class into pairs. Set a time limit of a few minutes for students to discuss the questions. Then ask students for their opinions. For example, 'I would like to travel in time to the past so that I could prevent bad things from happening.' Encourage them to give reasons to justify their answers and to provide examples.
- 2 Find an illustration or image from the film of *The Time Machine* and show it to the students. Ask them to describe what they see and what they think the story is about.

Draw students' attention to the text at the top which 'sets the scene'. Clarify understanding and play the audio.

Optional extension

Ask some comprehension questions to check general understanding of the text.

- 3 When students have read and listened to the text once, allow time to match the bold words in the text to the definitions. Tell them they may need to change the part of speech (form of verb, noun, etc.) to the base form to fit the glossary. Point out that making a glossary of unknown words in a text is a good way to learn vocabulary. Ask individual students for answers.

Answers

1 scaffolding 2 poignant 3 anticipation 4 velocity
5 dial 6 peculiar 7 vapour 8 advance 9 succession
10 fluctuate

- 4 Students read through the questions. Check for understanding and remind them to refer closely to the text to find the answers.

Answers

1 snail 2 a fire 3 dials 4 more advanced than
5 massive

- 5 Students read the text again. Discuss the questions and answers with the class.

Answers

1 b 2 c 3 a

- 6 Read through the sentences one at a time to check comprehension of any unknown vocabulary. Students complete the sentences with the words in the list. Ask students for answers.

Answers

1 scaffolding 2 succession 3 dial 4 poignant
5 Advances

Optional extension

Ask students to make another sentence for each item in the glossary. Explain that writing new vocabulary items in context is a good way to remember them.

ROLE PLAY

- 7 Organise the class into pairs. Read the instructions and check that students understand what they are going to do. Ask two students to read the first part of the conversation. Brainstorm ideas and phrases on the board. Set the students a time limit of 5–10 minutes to prepare their role plays. Monitor and offer support and encourage students to write scripts. Encourage as many pairs as possible to perform their role plays. Consider asking groups to perform to each other. The 'audience' group can monitor language use and make corrections if necessary. This can also be done as a full-class exercise.

LISTENING

- 8 Before listening, explain that students are going to hear an extract from later in the story. The Time Traveller has already met the Eloi, who are creatures who live above ground. They are scared of the Morlocks, who live underground. He has lost his time machine and realises that he must go to the land of the Morlocks to get it back. In this extract, he meets a Morlock for the first time. Play the recording twice. The first time, encourage students to listen without taking notes. The second time, they put the events in the correct order.

Answers

B, A, D, C, E

- 9 Students read through the questions. Encourage students to answer from memory. Play the recording again for students to complete their answers and to check.

Answers

1 ape 2 greyish 3 arms and legs 4 spider 5 human

AUDIO SCRIPT (abridged from Chapter 5)

Well, one very hot morning – my fourth, I think – as I was seeking shelter from the heat and glare in a colossal ruin near the great house where I slept and fed, there happened this strange thing: Clambering among these heaps of masonry, I found a narrow gallery, whose end and side windows were blocked by fallen masses of stone. By contrast with the brilliancy outside, it seemed at first impenetrably dark to me. I entered it groping, for the change from light to blackness made spots of colour swim before me. Suddenly I halted spellbound. A pair of eyes, luminous by reflection against the daylight without, was watching me out of the darkness.

The old instinctive dread of wild beasts came upon me. I clenched my hands and steadfastly looked into the glaring eyeballs. I was afraid to turn. Overcoming my fear, I advanced a step, put out my hand and touched something soft. At once the eyes darted sideways, and something white ran past me. I turned with my heart in my mouth, and saw a queer little ape-like figure, its head held down in a peculiar manner, running across the sunlit space behind me. In a moment it was hidden in a black shadow beneath another pile of ruined masonry.

My impression of it is, of course, imperfect; but I know it was a dull white, and had strange large greyish-red eyes; and flaxen hair on its head and back. But, as I say, it went too fast for me to see distinctly. I cannot even say whether it ran on all-fours, or only with its forearms held very low. After an instant's pause I followed it into the second heap of ruins. I could not find it at first; but, after a time in the profound obscurity, I came upon one of those round well-like openings of which I have told you, half closed by a fallen pillar. Could this thing have vanished down the shaft? I lit a match, and, looking down, I saw a small, white, moving creature, with large bright eyes. It made me shudder. It was so like a human spider! It was clambering down the wall, and now I saw for the first time a number of metal foot and hand rests forming a kind of ladder down the shaft. Then the light burned my fingers and fell out of my hand. When I had lit another the little monster had disappeared.

I do not know how long I sat peering down that well. It was not for some time that I could succeed in persuading myself that the thing I had seen was human. But, gradually, the truth dawned on me: that man had not remained one species, but had differentiated into two distinct animals: that my graceful children of the upper-world were not the sole descendants of our generation, but that this bleached, obscene, nocturnal thing, which had flashed before me, was also heir to all the ages.



CRITICAL THINKING

Play the final paragraph of the tapescript in italics again. Remind the students that the Time Traveller has already met the Eloi who live above ground, and here he meets a Morlock who lives underground. Ask the following questions to check understanding: *Does the Time Traveller think the Morlock is a human or not? Does the Time Traveller think the Eloi and the Morlock are related? Who does the Time Traveller prefer? How do we know?* Ask students to think about the relationship between the Eloi and the Morlocks. How are they different? What do they think about each other? How well do they get on? Working individually, students make notes. You can then bring their ideas together on the board and discuss their ideas as a class. Remind them that there are no correct answers at this stage, but they must be able to justify their ideas.

WRITING

- 10 Read through the *Writing* skills box. Students can write their essay in class or for homework. Students then swap their essay with a partner. They read each other's work and highlight any mistakes. They assess whether the student has answered the question fully and whether they have followed the steps. They then return the essay to the original student who looks at the comments and redrafts their work. Ask some students to read their essays out loud to the class.

THINK STYLE

The narrator

- 11 Ask students what they think about the style of the reading extract. Is it easy or difficult to understand? Is it fast or slow-paced? Is there too much or too little description? Ask them if they like reading monologues, or if they prefer reading dialogue between more than one character and why. Read and check that students understand the meaning of *sets the scene*. Ask them to think of another novel with one narrator and discuss the question. Write any ideas on the board. They could either present their ideas to the class or write a paragraph about the role of the narrator which you could collate for them to look at later.

Additional reading or internet research topics:

- *The Time Machine* themes
- The life of H. G. Wells
- *The War of the Worlds* radio panic