



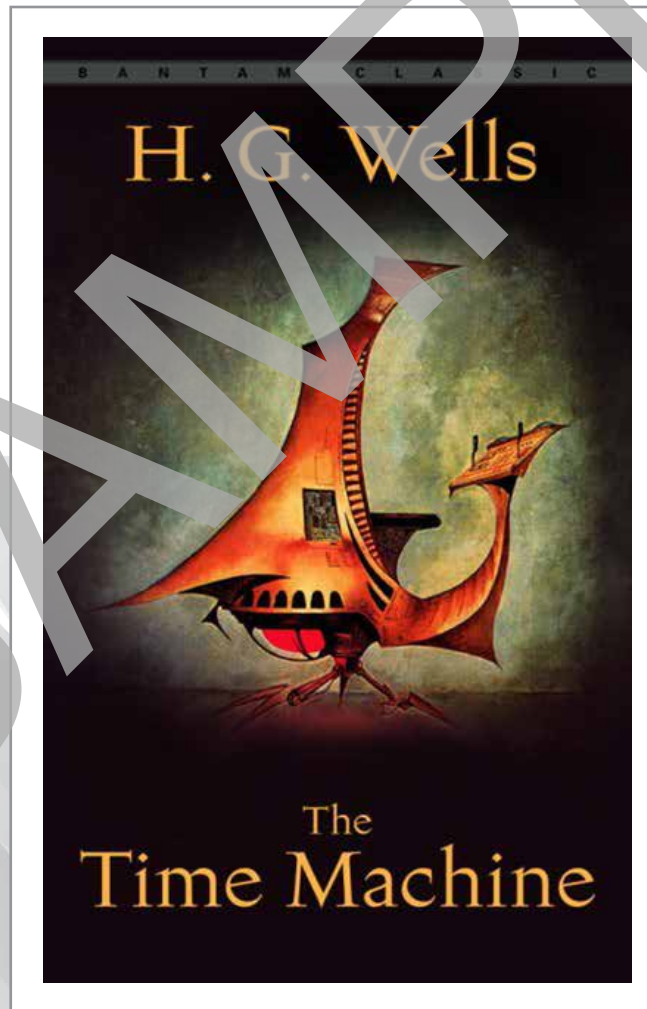
TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 9-12

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The Time Machine

H.G. Wells



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Time Machine

H.G. Wells

TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Skills and Strategies

Thinking

Analysis, compare/contrast,
research, critical thinking

Vocabulary

Target words, definitions

Literary Elements

Characterization, simile,
metaphor, allusion,
personification, plot
development, setting, theme,
foreshadowing, irony, genre

Writing

Poetry, essay, eulogy, script,
sequel, newspaper articles
and headlines

Listening/Speaking

Discussion, dramatization,
music

Comprehension

Cause/effect, prediction

Across the Curriculum

Art—sketch, collage,
montage; Music—ballad;
Current Events—newspaper
and magazine articles

Genre: science fiction

Setting: England, late 1890s; the future, 802,701

Point of View: primarily first-person narrative; some areas spoken by the Time Traveller

Themes: fear, adventure, survival, friendship, resourcefulness, human nature

Subjects: invention, man's limitations, scientific possibilities, social and cultural evolution/devolution of man

Conflict: person vs. evil, person vs. nature, person vs. self

Style: narrative

Tone: pessimistic (human evolution, the future), contemplative

Date of First Publication: 1895

Summary

The innovative, brave Time Traveller hurtles into the future after boarding his Time Machine. He arrives in the year 802,701 and encounters what appears to be a utopian society of advanced human beings. As he explores the future world, however, he begins to uncover a dark secret that is leading mankind to its inevitable doom. During his struggle to survive and escape back to his own time era, he discovers a decaying society and an unusual force of evil. In his futuristic adventure, he finds and loses a gentle friend, experiences unbelievable fear, and utilizes his own ingenuity. He faces his skeptical friends when he returns to the present. He then leaves again.

Characters

The Time Traveller: inventive, confident, courageous protagonist; relates his tale of the future in a first-person narrative; struggles and survives against evil in a future world

narrator: unnamed intellectual; explains the Time Traveller's pre- and post-travel discussions with his friends

Filby: red-headed, argumentative; the only person other than the Time Traveller referred to by name

Psychologist: rational, inquisitive; thinks the Time Traveller tricks them with his model of the Time Machine

Very Young Man: excited about the prospect of traveling in time

Provincial Mayor: mayor of the province

Medical Man: interested; eventually believes the Time Traveller suffers from overwork

Blank, the Editor: interested in facts; believes the Time Traveller's story is false

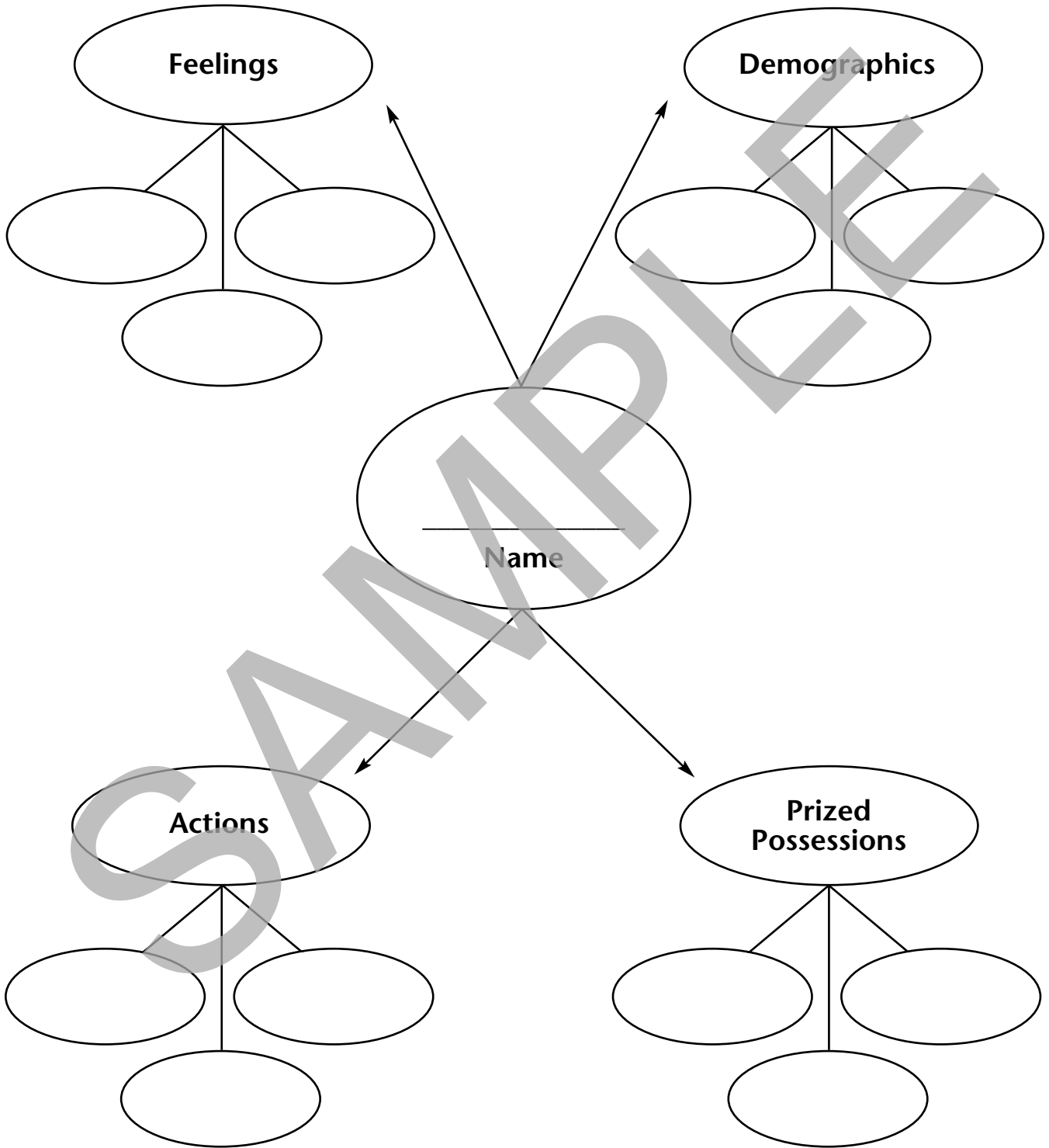
Dash, the Journalist: wants a factual account

Chose, the Silent Man: shy, quiet; says nothing

Weena: gentle, naïve, exquisite; Traveller's friend in the future world

Character Web

Directions: Complete the attribute web by filling in information specific to a character in the book.



Note: Where applicable, examples of literary devices found in each section are included in the Supplementary Activities. Guide students to identify these devices as they read the novel. Some sections include an Enrichment Activity (identified by *) for accelerated students.

Chapter 1, pp. 3–11

The Time Traveller tells his friends about his Time Machine. He demonstrates a model of his mechanism, then shows them the actual machine and announces his intention to explore time. They believe he has tricked them.

Vocabulary	
recondite	(3)
paradox	(4)
fecundity	(4)
introspective	(5)
communistic	(8)
plausible	(11)

Discussion Questions

1. Examine what the first chapter reveals about the Time Traveller and his latest invention. *(He is an intelligent inventor who is excited about his latest experiment, on which he has worked for two years. He demonstrates his scientific knowledge as he explains his theory of the geometry of Four Dimensions, i.e., Time is the fourth dimension of space, and counters their skepticism with rational logic. As he expounds his idea for time travel to his friends, he reveals that he has invented a machine that will travel through time, past or future. He shows them a model of his Time Machine and explains how it works. The Psychologist triggers the lever that sends the machine into time. The Time Traveller then shows them the big machine and announces his intention to explore time. pp. 3–11)*
2. Discuss information about the Traveller's friends. Analyze the significance of their titles and how each guest symbolizes an aspect of humanity. Why is Filby the only one who has a specific name? *(Filby is argumentative and questions every idea the Traveller presents. The Psychologist is skeptical, wants a rational explanation, and doesn't believe the Traveller is logical. He doesn't want the others to think he is disturbed by things he can't explain. The Provincial Mayor fits his name, i.e., he is the mayor of a province but he is also provincial [unsophisticated] in that he doesn't think "outside the box" and is slow to grasp a new idea. The Very Young Man exhibits youthful enthusiasm and willingness to accept new ideas. The Medical Doctor is open to new ideas but wants proof. Each of the titles represents the personality traits of the individual. The titles symbolize the skeptic, the person with limited thinking and lack of vision, the enthusiasm of youth, and the person who insists on proof before accepting anything new. Answers will vary. pp. 4–11)*
3. Analyze the Time Traveller's explanation of the geometry of Four Dimensions. Note the discussion about moving freely up and down. Discuss recent inventions that allow people to move up and down. *(He believes that, in addition to the recognized space dimensions of Length, Breadth, and Thickness, Time is a fourth dimension in which people can move about. In his opinion, Time can be measured and observed just as clearly as the Length, Breadth, and Thickness of space. The Medical Man mentions the ability to move up and down in balloons. Possible answers: various types of aircraft, bungee jumping, pogo sticks, etc. pp. 5–6)*
4. Discuss the significance of the narrator's statement, "To discover a society erected on a strictly communistic basis" (p. 8). Discuss prior knowledge of or speculation about communism. *(He envisions a future society that will be totally communistic, i.e., a political and economic system in which the government owns the land, factories, and other economic resources. This reflects Wells' philosophy as a member of the socialistic Fabian Society, which teaches basically the same concepts as communism but believes its goals can be achieved gradually through a series of reforms.)*

5. Examine the Time Traveller’s explanation of the model of his Time Machine and analyze the reactions of his friends. (*The mechanism is relatively simple, with a lever to push forward for the future or backward for the past, and a saddle seat for the traveler. The Traveller explains the mechanism carefully and assures the others that no trickery is involved. He is willing to waste the model to prove his point. The others are on the alert, expecting a trick. After the model disappears, the narrator is sure there is no trickery, and the others react with a mixture of belief and doubt. The Traveller is nonchalant. pp. 8–11*)
6. Analyze the implication of the Medical Man’s question, “Or is this a trick...?” and of Filby’s wink (p. 11). (*The Time Traveller has tricked them before. This explains, in part, why most of his friends are skeptical and wary. Filby does not believe the Traveller even when he vows he is telling the truth.*)
7. Find an example of personification on page 3 of the novel. (*The chairs embraced and caressed those who sat upon them.*)
8. **Prediction:** Will the Time Traveller actually be able to travel into the future? If so, what will he find?

Supplementary Activities

1. Drama: Working in small groups, stage the scene involving the departure of the Time Machine model.
2. *Research/Writing: Work with a partner and research the allusions on page 7 of the novel: the Battle of Hastings, Homer, and Plato. Choose one allusion and write a brief explanation of its importance to history.
3. Comprehension: Begin the Prediction Chart on page 6 of this guide using what you know from reading Chapter 1.
4. Art: Design your impression of the Time Machine.

Chapter 2, pp. 12–17

Some new characters are introduced. The Time Traveller arrives late for a dinner with his friends. He is disheveled, tired, and hungry. He tells them he has been time traveling. He agrees to tell his story but wants to do so without interruption.

Vocabulary	
	ingenuity (12)
	anachronism (12)
	jocular (13)
	cadger (14)
	caricature (15)
	verbatim (16)
	intonation (17)

Discussion Questions

1. Analyze the simile, “trusting their reputations for judgment with him was like furnishing a nursery with egg-shell china” (p. 12). (*Although his friends acknowledge the Time Traveller’s ingenuity, none of them really believes in the Time Machine. They suspect that he plans to play a joke on them. People who do take him seriously risk their reputations if and when he reveals his trickery. The Traveller has the ability to destroy their reputations just as children playing in a nursery can cause fragile china to crash around them.*)