

ENRICHMENT GUIDE



the magic
BICYCLE

SCHOOL DATES

JANUARY 13 - FEBRUARY 4, 2011

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A Note to Teachers and Parents

Dear Teachers and Parents,

Travel back and forward in time with us as we embark on the exciting adventure of THE MAGIC BICYCLE. Join Willy and Lilah as they uncover their town's past and discover how their actions help to shape history and the world the way we know it. Prepare to be on the edge of your seat as you try to figure out where the magic bicycle will take Willy and Lilah to next!

Enclosed in this enrichment guide is a range of materials and activities intended to help you discover connections within the play through the curricula. It is our hope that you will use the experience of attending the theater and seeing THE MAGIC BICYCLE with your students as a teaching tool. Use this guide to best serve your children—pick and choose, or adapt, any of these suggestions for discussions or activities. We encourage you to take advantage of the enclosed student worksheets—please feel free to photocopy the sheets for your students, or the entire guide for the benefit of other teachers.

Enjoy the show!

Julia Magnasco
Education Director

First Stage Policies

- The use of recording equipment and cameras are not permitted during the performance.
- Food, drink, candy and gum are not permitted during the performance.
- Electronic devices are not permitted in the theater space.
- Should a student become ill, suffer an injury or have another problem, please escort him or her out of the theater space.
- In the unlikely event of a general emergency, the theater lights will go on and the stage manager will come on stage to inform the audience of the problem. Remain in your seats, visually locate the nearest exit and wait for the stage manager to guide your group from the theater.

Seating for people with disabilities: If you have special seating needs for any student(s) and did not indicate your need when you ordered your tickets, please call our School Sales Specialist at (414) 267-2962. Our knowledge of your needs will enable us to serve you better upon your arrival to the theater.

Setting the Stage: Synopsis

In a run down parlor room in the late 19th century, an older woman quickly tries to tidy up three unkempt and disheveled children. As the children fall into position, they begin to wobble and feel woozy because they haven't eaten in days. However, now is not the time to be complaining—a potential client is coming to inspect the children with the intention of adopting one of them. After viewing all the children, the client chooses to take one, Lilah, with her. Lilah refuses to go with the woman because she does not want to be torn away from Millie and Tigg, the other children at the orphanage. The client leaves in a huff and Mrs. Wallop advances at the children in a rage, but decides to wait for them to have their beating until Reverend Wallop returns home. When the Reverend does come home and hears how the children reacted to the client, he bursts into a fit of rage. The children quickly steal the Reverend's money from the cookie jar and run far away from the house. Once the children stop running they hear a loud KA-BOOM coming from close by. Through the smoke appears a funky bicycle with a kid dressed in contemporary clothing on it. Willy is so excited by his bike trip that he tries calling his Dad right away to tell him about it. It isn't until he realizes his cell phone won't work that he notices he is in his town, only in the past. Lilah, Millie and Tigg are stunned by Willy—they've never seen anything like him before! The children crowd around the bike as Willy explains to them what it is and where he comes from. Then, from the distance, the children hear the Reverend coming for them. Lilah decides to go with Willy, and Millie and Tigg take the money from the cookie jar and run. Just as Reverend Wallop and the cops approach Lilah and Willy, they hop on the bike and are transported to another time.

Willy and Lilah are brought to 1923, moments before the occurrence of the Big Fire when all the warehouses and factories in town burn down and even the steel bridge across the river melts. Lilah asks Willy how the fire starts, and when he tells her it is caused by a couple of homeless people who built a fire next to a pile of wood pallets, she decides she needs to stop the fire from happening. Lilah puts out the hobos' fire and as she does so, she recognizes one of the hobos to be her childhood friend Tigg. Willy interrupts Tigg and Lilah and they head back to the bike, which is dialed to the year 2010. However, when Willy and Lilah reach 2010, the town looks nothing like what Willy remembered—his house is occupied by people that are not his family, and the large Quimby Building downtown is not standing where it has always stood since the Big Fire. Willy realizes that by stopping the Big Fire from

occurring they changed history. Willy and Lilah know they have to go back to 1923, just before the Big Fire, and realign history. Willy and Lilah start the fire and then quickly return to the bike and the year 2010. This time, when they land in 2010, everything is the way Willy remembers, including the Quimby Building standing at the center of downtown.

Inside Willy's house, Willy shows Lilah around and introduces her to the technological and cultural advances of the 21st Century: iPods, Frosted Flakes, airplanes, motorcycles, and text lingo. Lilah asks Willy how the bike works. Willy is not entirely sure because his father, Archie, invented it. As the two examine the bike more closely, it starts glowing another date: October 15, 1862. The two jump on the bike and soon find themselves surrounded by prisoners in the middle of a firing squad. Willy and Lilah quickly change the date on the bike and manage to just miss getting shot. They land safely in the year 1035, but Lilah is worried about the prisoner they just left who was about to get shot. Lilah leaps back on the bike, leaving Willy in 1035. Willy meets a wild kid in 1035 named Thorlaken. Thorlaken is a Viking—he hunts for his food and works every day to survive in the wild. Thorlaken starts to panic when the sky suddenly turns black.

Willy and Thorlaken find themselves watching the solar eclipse from inside the safety of a cave. Lilah never makes it to 1862. Instead, she finds herself in 1824 in a log cabin with a frontier girl named Abigail. Abigail takes Lilah in and gives her warm clothes to wear and invites her home with her. Lilah is about to join Abigail when the bike begins lighting up again with the date: October 15, 1862. Lilah jumps on the bike and is transported back to the firing squad. Once she lands, Lilah jumps off the bike and begins begging the Lieutenant not to shoot the prisoner.

The Lieutenant is frustrated by Lilah and demands for her to stand next to the prisoner so he can order both of them to be shot. However, the soldiers cannot bring themselves to shoot Lilah, and she and the prisoner are brought back to a cave serving as a prison cell. Lilah finds the prisoner, Jedediah, to be crazy but pure and good at heart. As Lilah tells Jed all about the bike, the Lieutenant comes into the cell and tells them they are to be shot first thing in the morning. A soldier next enters the cell and is stunned to see Lilah instead of Willy. It is soon discovered that the soldier is really Archie, Willy's father. Archie built the bike by following the plans written in an old family diary by Jedediah. Archie was so proud of building the time-traveling bike that Jed formulated that he came back in time to show Jed. However,



Setting the Stage: Synopsis

(Continued)

when Archie came back to show Jed, Jed got so excited that he insisted on showing the bike to the Colonel. This was a mistake because the Colonel figured Jed was a spy with this sort of advanced technology, and decided to have him shot. Archie can't allow Jed to be shot because if he is shot, Jed will never marry Archie's great, great, great, great, something, grandmother and therefore he and Willy will cease to exist. Archie programmed the bike to fetch Willy and bring him to 1862, to help save them all. However, no one knows where in time Willy is.

As Lilah and Archie try to figure out where Willy could be, Jed notices a drawing on the cave wall of a solar eclipse. They could tell the drawing was done quite a long time ago because it was carved right into the wall of the cave, along with the inscription: Willy Wasserman was here! They can find Willy if they can figure out what time Willy is in. They finally figure out the date of the solar eclipse in time and Lilah, Archie, and Jed all jump on the bike and program it to 1035. When they arrive in 1035, they are greeted by Willy and Thorlaken. Willy jumps on the bike with the rest of the gang, leaving Thorlaken with a box of Frosted Flakes.

The team travels back to 1862, before Jed shows the colonial the bike. They get off the bike and Archie gives Jed the instructions to write down all the formulas for the bike in a special diary

and then to put that diary in the attic of the house on Mulberry Lane. Jed agrees to do this—and if he doesn't follow through with this then Archie will never find the diary and invent the bike and therefore the bike will cease to exist and in mid-jump Archie, Willy and Lilah will all die. Hesitantly, Archie, Willy, and Lilah return to the bike and program it for 2010. When they land they are back at home, with everything just the way they left it—Jed did write down the formula and place the diary in the attic, just like they told him to!

As Willy settles back in at home, Lilah remarks that she too wants to go home, back to 1910. When she arrives in 1910 she sees a woman wearing dark glasses and carrying a white cane. Lilah introduces herself to the woman, who mentions that she once knew a Lilah when she was a child. Lilah found Millie, her childhood friend now all grown up. Millie invites Lilah to stay with her. Willy bids farewell to Lilah and returns to his home in 2010.



About the Playwright

Taken directly from: <http://www.pwcenter.org/lab.php?uid=504>

John Olive

JOHN OLIVE is a widely produced and award-winning playwright, a novelist, a screenwriter and a popular teacher of creative writing.

His plays include: *STANDING ON MY KNEES*, *MINNESOTA MOON*, *THE VOICE OF THE PRAIRIE*, *EVELYN & THE POLKA KING*, *KILLERS*, *THE SUMMER MOON*, *THE ECSTASY OF ST. THERESA*, *CARELESS LOVE*, and many others. Producing theaters include: the Manhattan Theatre Club, Old Globe, Steppenwolf, Wisdom Bridge, South Coast Rep, Aley Theater, the Guthrie, Actors Theatre Of Louisville, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, ACT/Seattle, and many others.

Lately John has written many plays for young audiences, both adaptations and originals: *SIDEWAYS STORIES FROM WAYSIDE SCHOOL*, *JOHNNY TREMAIN*, *JASON & THE GOLDEN FLEECE*, *THE MAGIC BICYCLE*, *PHARAOH SERKET AND THE LOST STONE OF FIRE*, *WATER BABIES*, among others. These plays have been widely produced, at Seattle Children's Theatre, First Stage, Stage One Louisville, Oregon Children's Theater, the Arden Theatre, People's Light and Theatre Co., Dallas Children's Theatre, Main Street Theatre, and others.

Awards include: Jerome Fellowship, McKnight Fellowships, National Endowment For The Arts Fellowship, Bush Fellowships, Society of Midland Authors Award For Drama (*STANDING ON MY KNEES*), Kennedy Center Award For New Plays (*THE SUMMER MOON*), Rockefeller Residency (*Wisdom Bridge*). John has written screen and teleplays for: Disney, Amblin Entertainment, ShadowCatcher Entertainment, Yorktown Productions, Lorimar Television, among others. He has developed material at the O'Neill, Sundance, New Harmony Project, PlayLabs, etc. John has two prose projects going: a YA novel called *Smartass* and a nonfiction book about bedtime stories, *Tell Me A Story In The Dark*. Currently, John teaches screenwriting at the University of Minnesota.

He lives in Minneapolis with his wife Mary and their son Michael.

His website is: <http://johnolive.net>



Recommended Reading

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- *The Phantom Tollbooth* by Norton Juster
 - *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle
 - *A Swiftly Tilting Planet* by Madeleine L'Engle
 - *Many Waters* by Madeleine L'Engle
 - *Skellig* by David Almond
 - *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* by E.L. Konigsburg
-



Pre-Show Questions

1. THE MAGIC BICYCLE is about a time traveling bicycle. If you had the opportunity to move around in time, what time and where would you go? Why would you want to go there?
2. In THE MAGIC BICYCLE, the kids travel through different times and places. How do you think the scenic artists will transform the stage to look like many different places?
3. Characters in THE MAGIC BICYCLE come face to face with technology of their future. If someone happened to meet you from the future, what kinds of technology do you think they might have that we do not have right now?
5. This is a story about choices and consequences- how every choice we make can have a distinct consequence. Think of a decision that you recently had to make. Since you know what the consequences of your actions were, try to imagine an opposite choice to that decision and describe what that consequence could have been.



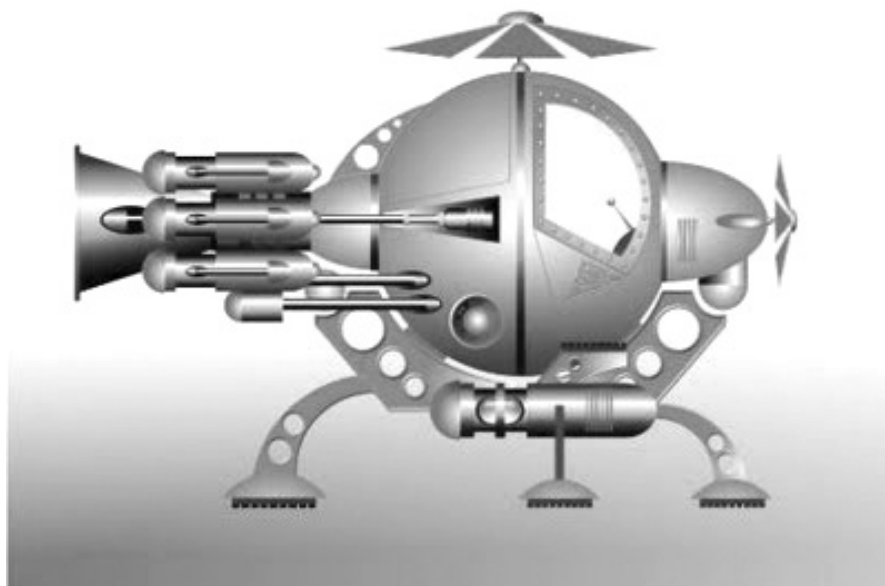
Time Travel Cause and Effect

LANGUAGE ARTS CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Taken from: <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/lessonplan.jsp?id=195>

Activity

1. Introduce the concept of time travel to students by engaging the class in a discussion about time travel, using the following prompts:
 - a. Where would you go? Which year or period of time would you travel to? Who would you want to meet or what event would you want to witness? Where would you find this person or see this event? Why would you want to meet this person or witness this event? How might you change history?
2. Briefly introduce the short story *A Sound of Thunder* to students. Explain that in this story they will learn that traveling through time has its consequences.
 - a. *A Sound of Thunder*, by Ray Bradbury, is available in *R is for Rocket*, (New York: Doubleday, 1952), or at http://www.lasalle.edu/~didio/courses/hon462/hon462_assets/sound_of_thunder.htm. If this story seems too advanced for your students, consider reading *The Time Bike* by Jane Langton or *The Orphan of Ellis Island: A Time-Travel Adventure* by Elvira Woodruff.
3. Read *The Sound of Thunder* out loud to students while they follow along silently.
 - a. Because *The Sound of Thunder* has some complex vocabulary and uses figurative language, stop every so often and model strategic reading strategies (self-monitoring, reread, predicting, etc.) when the story becomes difficult. Review new vocabulary as you read. Write these words on the board and discuss their meaning.
4. Afterwards, ask students to share their thoughts and feelings on the story, and go through any questions they may have about it. Discuss student responses.
5. Continue the discussion by introducing the notion of cause and effect, citing examples from the short story. Ask students to contribute instances of outcomes that resulted from the characters' actions in the short story.
6. Distribute "The Butterfly Effect" worksheet located on the next page and discuss possible outcomes for each topic. Allow students time to complete.



Time Travel Cause and Effect: The Butterfly Effect

LANGUAGE ARTS STUDENT WORKSHEET

Taken from: <http://teacher.scholastic.com/LessonPlans/pdf/butterflyeffect.pdf>

In the short story, *The Sound of Thunder*, we learned that traveling through time can be dangerous. The characters from the story realize how they impact nature when one of the hunters steps on a butterfly. Through the destruction of one small element of the ecosystem, the future was changed. This is known as the "Butterfly Effect."

People are causing changes in the ecosystem today. Choose one of the topics below and write six sentences about how "tomorrow" may be affected by that topic.

Example:

Today: *There is an oil spill off the coast of California.*

Tomorrow:

1. *Fish are poisoned.*
2. *People must buy expensive fish from the east coast.*
3. *People can no longer afford fish so they eat more meat.*
4. *More and more people get high cholesterol.*
5. *Some people die from heart attacks due to high cholesterol.*
6. *A leader who creates positive change in the world is never born.*

Other topics to consider:

Today: A park is made into a parking lot.

Tomorrow:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Today: A new landfill opens in your neighborhood.

Tomorrow:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Write your topic here.

Today: _____

Complete three "tomorrow" sentences.

Tomorrow:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Leaders of Our Community and Nation, Past and Present

SOCIAL SCIENCE CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Taken directly from: <http://school.discoveryeducation.com/lessonplans/programs/leadersofearlyamerica/>



Activity

1. In this project, students will identify men and women who are leaders in their community and in the world at large. From this more concrete experience, they will travel back to early America and learn on a more abstract level about leaders of the young nation.
2. Begin by asking students to identify the principal of the school and what he or she does. Start a list of leaders' qualities, traits, or characteristics on the board.
 - a. Such a list might include the following:
 - Makes up rules
 - Earns respect
 - Helps and comforts people
 - Makes people work hard
3. Go on to ask students to identify people who head up other groups or organizations that they may be familiar with and to list the heads' qualities, traits, or characteristics.
 - a. Students may identify a person by name or by title. Consider talking about the leaders of the following groups or organizations. Add qualities, traits, and characteristics of each leader to the list you started in the preceding step.
 - Leader of the town or city in which students live
 - Leader of the fire department of the town or city
 - Leader of the police department of the town or city
 - Leader of the largest store or major business in the town or city
 - Leader of the local newspaper
 - Leader of the state
 - Leader of the country
 - Leader of another country
4. Next, share with students, or review with them, stories about one or more of the following:
 - Paul Revere and the minutemen
 - George Washington and the Continental Army
 - Thomas Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence
5. Convert the list of leadership qualities, traits, or characteristics, which you've been adding to, into a chart with the qualities, traits, and characteristics as column heads. Place the name of one early American leader in each row. Based on what students have learned about Revere, Washington, and Jefferson, ask them to tell you which leader demonstrated which qualities, traits, or characteristics—and provide examples of when or how. Have a student check off the columns that apply to Revere, Washington, and Jefferson.
6. When the chart is complete, help students interpret it. What traits do all these leaders seem to have in common? What traits do none of them have? What traits do some but not all of them have?
7. After the class discussion, ask students to write one paragraph answering the following questions:
 - What does it take to be a leader?



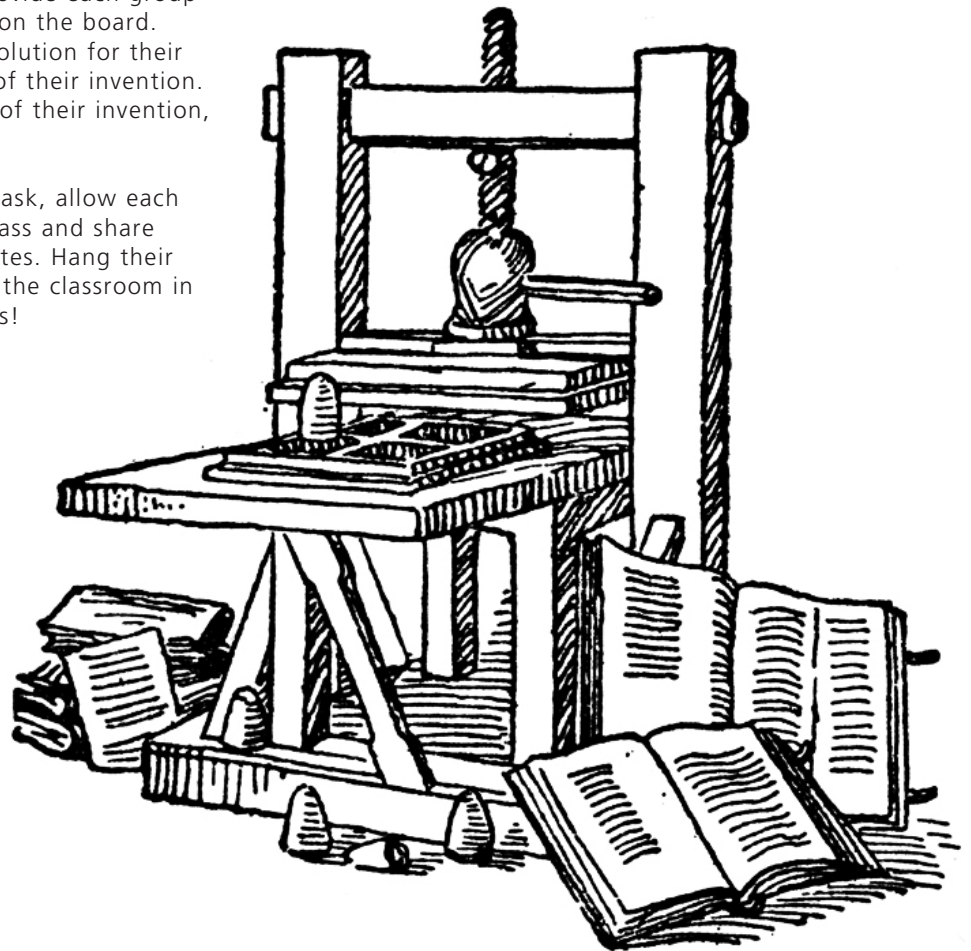
Young Inventors Workshop

SCIENCE CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Adapted from: <http://www.crayola.com/lesson-plans/detail/inventors'-workshop-lesson-plan/>, http://www.susancaseybooks.com/PDF/Young_Inventors_Worksheet.pdf, Prepared by Susan Casey, author of *Kids Inventing! A Handbook for Young Inventors and Women Invent! Two Centuries of Discoveries That Have Shaped Our World*, www.susancaseybooks.com

Activity

1. An invention is a product of the imagination, which can be a device or a process. As a class, create a list of inventions that make your life easier. Hold a class discussion on what your lives would be like without these inventions. What wouldn't you be able to do?
 - a. If possible, interview someone who lived before the items were invented. With a small group, act out what your life would be like without these inventions.
2. Share with students that Inventors get ideas for inventions in many ways. Sometimes it is by accident. Sometimes it is when they are doing ordinary activities. They notice something that bothers them and they try to solve the problem with an invention.
3. Ask students "What bothers you about washing and feeding your pet? Playing a sport? Doing your chores? Eating an ice cream cone?" Add to this list if you wish. Record their responses on the board in the form of a chart.
4. Place students into small groups and provide each group with a different challenge from the list on the board. As a group they must come up with a solution for their challenge and together, draw a sketch of their invention. Write a paragraph to explain the name of their invention, how it works, and its purpose.
5. Once the groups have completed their task, allow each group to come up to the front of the class and share these new inventions with their classmates. Hang their pictures and paragraphs up throughout the classroom in honor of these budding Young Inventors!



Is Time Travel Possible?

SCIENCE CLASSROOM INFORMATION

Taken directly from: http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/phonedrmarc/2003_may.shtml



Hi! Thanks for calling Dr. Marc at The Space Place to hear what I'm thinking about this May. Members of the Tripoli Minnesota Rocket Club #45 ask a very intriguing question this month: Is time travel possible?

Time travel is one of my favorite topics! I wrote some time travel stories in junior high school that used a machine of my own invention to travel backwards in time, and I have continued to study this fascinating concept as the years have gone by.

We all travel in time. During the last year, I've moved forward one year and so have you. Another way to say that is that we travel in time at the rate of 1 hour per hour.

But the question is, can we travel in time faster or slower than "1 hour per hour"? Or can we actually travel backward in time, going back, say 2 hours per hour, or 10 or 100 years per hour?

It is mind-boggling to think about time travel. What if you went back in time and prevented your father and mother from meeting? You would prevent yourself from ever having been born! But then if you hadn't been born, you could not have gone back in time to prevent them from meeting.

The great 20th century scientist Albert Einstein developed a theory called Special Relativity. The ideas of Special Relativity are very hard to imagine because they aren't about what we experience in everyday life, but scientists have confirmed them. This theory says that space and time are really aspects of the same thing--space-time. There's a speed limit of 300,000 kilometers per second (or 186,000 miles per second) for anything that travels through space-time, and light always travels the speed limit through empty space.

Special Relativity also says that a surprising thing happens when you move through space-time, especially when your speed relative to other objects is close to the speed of light. Time goes slower for you than for the people you left behind. You won't notice this effect until you return to those stationary people.

Say you were 15 years old when you left Earth in a spacecraft traveling at about 99.5% of the speed of light (which is much faster than we can achieve now), and celebrated only five birthdays during your space voyage. When you get home at the age of 20, you would find that all your classmates were 65 years old, retired, and enjoying their grandchildren! Because time passed more slowly for you, you will have experienced only five years of life, while your classmates will have experienced a full 50 years.



Is Time Travel Possible? Continued

So, if your journey began in 2003, it would have taken you only five years to travel to the year 2053, whereas it would have taken all of your friends 50 years. In a sense, this means you have been time traveling. This is a way of going to the future at a rate faster than 1 hour per hour.

Time travel of a sort also occurs for objects in gravitational fields. Einstein had another remarkable theory called General Relativity, which predicts that time passes more slowly for objects in gravitational fields (like here on Earth) than for objects far from such fields. So there are all kinds of space and time distortions near black holes, where the gravity can be very intense.

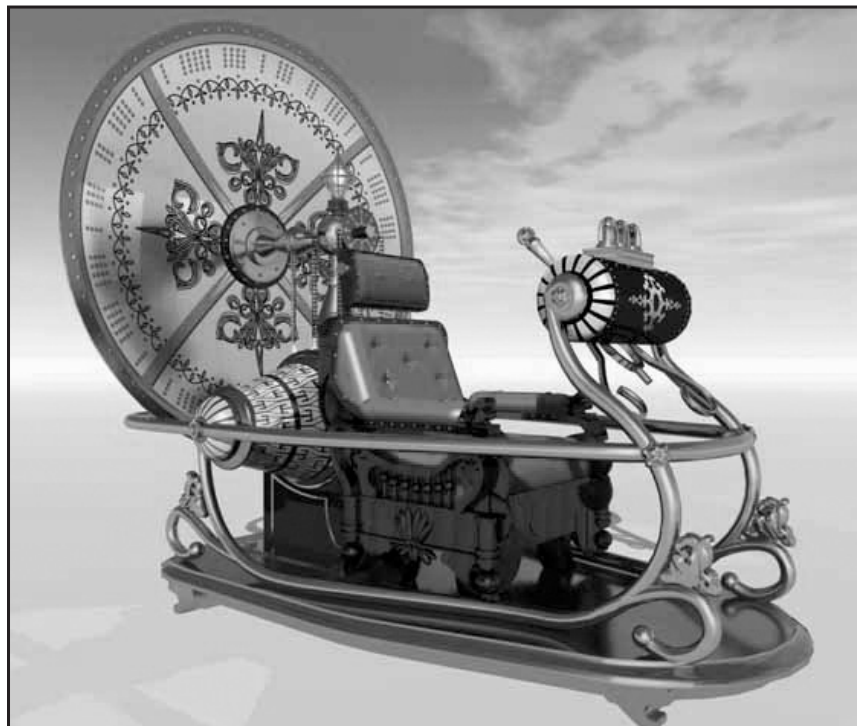
In the past few years, some scientists have used those distortions in space-time to think of possible ways time machines could work. Some like the idea of "worm holes," which may be shortcuts through space-time. This and other ideas are wonderfully interesting, but we don't know at this point whether they are possible for real objects. Still the ideas are based on good, solid science. In all time travel theories allowed by real science, there is no way a traveler can go back in time to before the time machine was built.

I am confident time travel into the future is possible, but we would need to develop some very advanced technology to do it. We could travel 10,000 years into the future and age only 1 year during that journey. However, such a trip would consume an extraordinary amount of energy. Time travel to the past is more difficult. We do not understand the science as well.

Actually, scientists and engineers who plan and operate some space missions must account for the time distortions that occur because of both General and Special Relativity. These effects are far too small to matter in most human terms or even over a human lifetime. However, very tiny fractions of a second do matter for the precise work necessary to fly spacecraft throughout the solar system.

Visit The Space Place at spaceplace.nasa.gov and find out how one NASA mission is doing some very clever space-time experiments to test Einstein's theory of relativity using the International Space Station.

Thanks again for calling Dr. Marc here at The Space Place. And I'll look forward to your next call when we've traveled a month into the future.



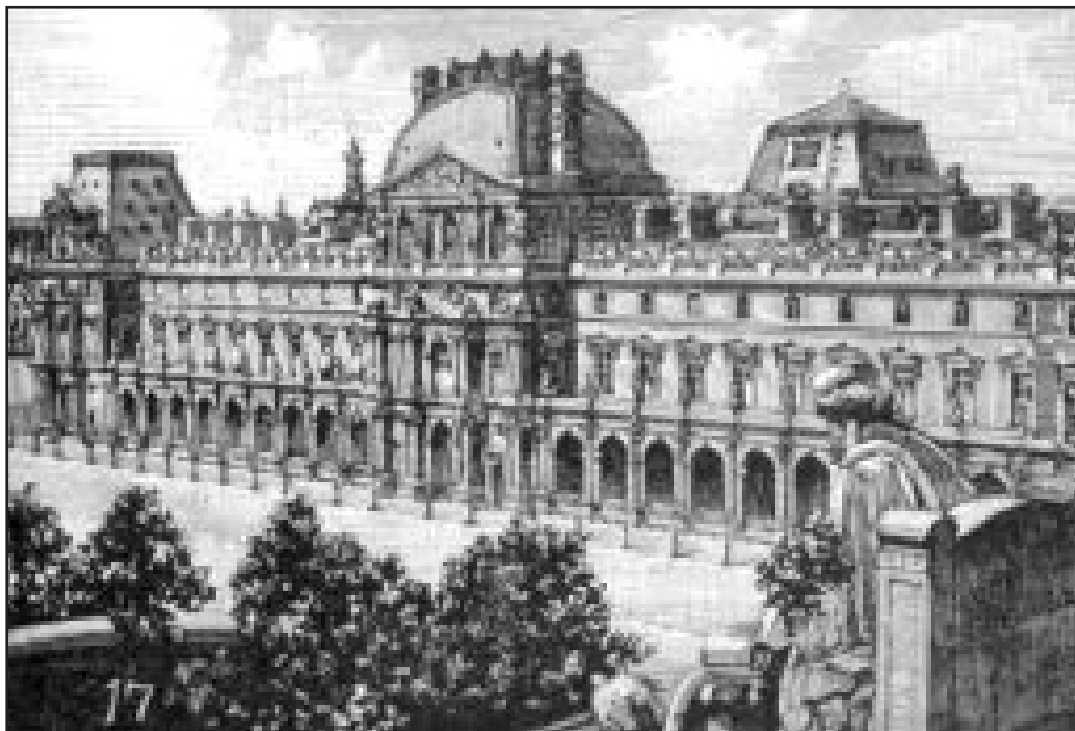
Back in Time Travel

SOCIAL SCIENCE CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Adapted from: http://69.43.199.47/la_tsl/archives/05-1/lesson034.shtml

Activity

1. Explain to students that a time machine has enabled them to travel back in time! In pairs, students must choose the time period and civilization, community, or location they will be traveling to. Next, it is up to them to design and create a travel brochure to entice time travelers to join them on their travels.
2. Within their historical brochures students will be including general information about their chosen civilization/location in time, and must include pictures and images that will appeal to the eyes of traveling consumers. Each brochure is required to include:
 - A detailed map of the chosen location/time period
 - Information about language(s) spoken
 - Facts about the government
 - Information about the culture of the chosen period
 - Types of transportation a visitor would see
 - How natural geography played an important role in the lives of people
3. Once complete, allow students to share their brochures with the class, and place the brochures throughout the class for students to go through on their own.



Our Community's Oral History

SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Taken from: http://www.youthsource.ab.ca/teacher_resources/oral_overview.html

Oral history serves as an exciting process designed to increase student involvement and improve student insight into historical experiences. It involves students directly in a method of historical inquiry, which includes the organization and presentation of data directly from another person.

Oral history is an effective tool that requires students to become active participants in their own learning process. It invites inquiry, stimulates discussion, and transforms abstract concepts into concrete reality.

Activity

1. Have your class create an oral history of your town or city. Find a back issue of the local daily or weekly from at least 30 to 40 years ago. Bring copies of this paper into class and have students examine it thoroughly. Make sure they look at everything: movie listings, store advertisements, news and feature stories, classified ads.
 - a. As students read, have them keep an ongoing list of ideas, questions, and names that might be useful as back ground information for oral-history interviews.
2. Gather all the student ideas, questions, and names they generated from the local paper and compile them into a master list. As a class, decide on an overall theme to focus the oral history project on, based on some of the strongest ideas mentioned in the list—for example: arts and entertainment, politics, local issues, sports, etc.
3. Place students into small groups and assign each group to come up with one person to interview who lived in the town at the time the local paper was published. They should be able to justify why they chose their person to interview, and why they believe they will make a strong interviewee. The groups should then come up with a list of questions they would ask their interviewee, specifically related to the overall theme chosen for the oral history project.
4. Have each group share with the class the person they chose to interview, and why they picked him/her. As a class, decide on the strongest interviewee candidate. Have the winning group read their list of questions out loud, and have the students add to this list of questions.
5. Invite the chosen guest to your class, and with the list of questions created by the students, begin to interview the person. Volunteer students will take over the interview, and record and photograph the person.
6. After the interview experience, ask students what they learned about the history of their town? Continue the discussion by asking students why it is important to learn about people's historical experiences or memories? How do people's memories and viewpoints shape historical events? What would you still like to learn about the history of your town?



Why Study History? By Peter N. Stearns

SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM INFORMATION

Taken directly from: <http://www.studentsfriend.com/aids/curraids/articles/stearns.html>, © 2001 - 2007 michael g. maxwell - maxwell learning l.l.c.

Excerpts from Why Study History? by Peter N. Stearns



People live in the present. They plan for and worry about the future. History, however, is the study of the past. Given all the demands that press in from living in the present and anticipating what is yet to come, why bother with what has been? Given all the desirable and available branches of knowledge, why insist—as most American educational programs do—on a good bit of history? And why urge many students to study even more history than they are required to? History should be studied because it is essential to individuals and to society, and because it harbors beauty.

History Helps Us Understand People and Societies

In the first place, history offers a storehouse of information about how people and societies behave. Understanding the operations of people and societies is difficult, though a number of disciplines make the attempt. How can we evaluate war if the nation is at peace—unless we use historical materials? How can we understand genius, the influence of technological innovation, or the role that beliefs play in shaping family life, if we don't use what we know about experiences in the past? Some social scientists attempt to formulate laws or theories about human behavior. But even these recourses depend on historical information, except for in limited, often artificial cases in which experiments can be devised to determine how people act. Major aspects of a society's operation, like mass elections, missionary activities, or military alliances, cannot be set up as precise experiments. Consequently, history must serve, however imperfectly, as our laboratory, and data from the past must serve as our most vital evidence in the unavoidable quest to figure out why our complex species behaves as it does in societal settings. This, fundamentally, is why we cannot stay away from history: it offers the only extensive evidential base for the contemplation and analysis of how societies function, and people need to have some sense of how societies function simply to run their own lives.

History Helps Us Understand Change and How the Society We Live in Came to Be

The second reason history is inescapable as a subject of serious study follows closely on the first. The past causes the present, and so the future. Any time we try to know why something happened—whether a shift in political party dominance in the American Congress, a major change in the teenage suicide rate, or a war in the Balkans or the Middle



Why Study History? By Peter N. Stearns

East - we have to look for factors that took shape earlier. Sometimes fairly recent history will suffice to explain a major development, but often we need to look further back to identify the causes of change. Only through studying history can we grasp how things change; only through history can we begin to comprehend the factors that cause change; and only through history can we understand what elements of an institution or a society persist despite change.

History Contributes to Moral Understanding

History also provides a terrain for moral contemplation. Studying the stories of individuals and situations in the past allows a student of history to test his or her own moral sense, to hone it against some of the real complexities individuals have faced in difficult settings. People who have weathered adversity not just in some work of fiction, but in real, historical circumstances can provide inspiration. "History teaching by example" is one phrase that describes this use of a study of the past—a study not only of certifiable heroes, the great men and women of history who successfully worked through moral dilemmas, but also of more ordinary people who provide lessons in courage, diligence, or constructive protest.

History Provides Identity

History also helps provide identity, and this is unquestionably one of the reasons all modern nations encourage its teaching in some form. Historical data include evidence about how families, groups, institutions and whole countries were formed and about how they have evolved while retaining cohesion. Many institutions, businesses, communities, and social units, such as ethnic groups in the United States, use history for similar identity purposes. Merely defining the group in the present pales against the possibility of forming an identity based on a rich past. And of course nations use identity history as well. Histories that tell the national story, emphasizing distinctive features of the national experience, are meant to drive home an understanding of national values and a commitment to national loyalty.

Studying History Is Essential for Good Citizenship

History provides data about the emergence of national institutions, problems, and values—it's the only significant storehouse of such data available. It offers evidence also about how nations have interacted with other societies, providing international and comparative perspectives essential for responsible citizenship. Further, studying history helps us understand how recent, current, and prospective changes that affect the lives of citizens are emerging or may emerge and what causes are involved. More important, studying history encourages habits of mind that are vital for responsible public behavior, whether as a national or community leader, an informed voter, a petitioner, or a simple observer.

What Skills Does a Student of History Develop?

- The Ability to Assess Evidence
- The Ability to Assess Conflicting Interpretations
- Experience in Assessing Past Examples of Change

Historical study, in sum, is crucial to the promotion of that elusive creature, the well-informed citizen. It provides basic factual information about the background of our political institutions and about the values and problems that affect our social well-being. It also contributes to our capacity to use evidence, assess interpretations, and analyze change and continuities. No one can ever quite deal with the present as the historian deals with the past—we lack the perspective for this feat; but we can move in this direction by applying historical habits of mind, and we will function as better citizens in the process.

Peter N. Stearns is Heinz Professor of History and dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Carnegie Mellon University. He also serves as editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Social History*. He is author of numerous books on European, U.S. social, and world history and history teaching. Recent books include *Millennium III*, *Century XXI: A Retrospective on the Future* and *Fat History: Bodies and Beauty in the Modern West*.

To read the full article, please visit: <http://www.studentsfriend.com/aids/curraids/articles/stearns.html>



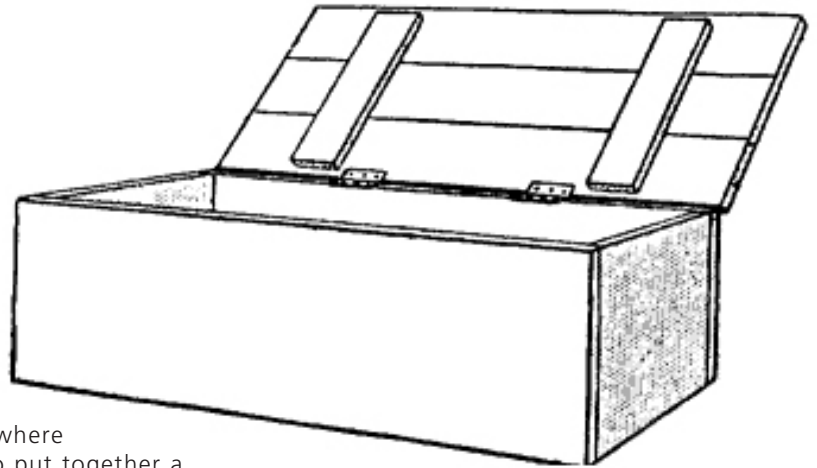
Create a Time Capsule

SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Taken Directly from: http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/1009238/time_capsule_lesson_plan.html?cat=25

Materials

- Lined paper - enough for each student to have at least two.
- Tape
- Very large box - You might want to bring a second one just in case the first doesn't fit all of your students things.



Teacher prep work: You will need to make sure that it is okay to dig a hole and bury something somewhere on school grounds. Explain that you want your class to put together a time capsule and you need somewhere to bury it. Before starting this lesson plan you will need to give your students a few days heads up so that they have time to bring in something that they wouldn't mind burying and not having anymore but that they would like future generations to know about. If they don't want to bring the item itself, they can bring a picture or magazine cut out of it.

Activity

1. You'll want to talk to your students about the importance of history. Explain to them that from people documenting objects and events in their time period, we actually get a clearer picture of how things worked and what went on during that time period. Talk to your students about how we might be left guessing at what some things were used for if we didn't have documented cases of them being used.
 - a. If you want to make this part come across even more, try finding some older objects that you think your students might not know the use for. Pass them around and have students guess before revealing its use.
2. After you have imparted the importance of history and documented information, have each of your students write a letter to the future generation. Let them know that the letter can include anything that they'd like but that it must be grammatically correct because we want the future generation to know how intelligent we are.
3. After you collect these letters, you now want your students to write about the object or picture that they brought in for the time capsule. Tell them there must be at least one paragraph on how the object works and what it does and at least one paragraph on why you feel it is important.
4. Finally, students will place their letters and objects in the box to be buried. If you choose, have students decorate the outside of the box to represent their interests and personalities.
5. After all of the information is sealed inside the box, you'll want to bury it now. If you have the right clearance, try to do this with your class so that they can be a part of it. As a class, decide who or when the box should be opened. Perhaps the class will write a letter for students in 20 or 50 years to open the box, or maybe the class decides they will all come back to the school and open the box together the year they are to graduate from high school.



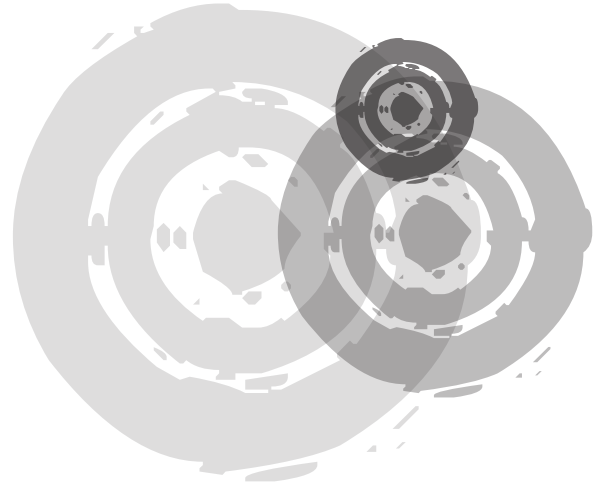
Build a Time Machine

ART CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Taken Directly from: <http://www.suite101.com/content/build-a-time-machine-art-activity-a134464>, Copyright Erica Loop.

Materials

- Used large cardboard boxes
- Tape
- Glue
- Markers
- Paints and brushes
- Construction paper
- Large sheets of paper or butcher paper
- Large sheets of foam core board
- Cardboard tubes
- Steps to Creating a Time Machine



Activity

1. Start with a brainstorming session. Ask each student to draw his or her own picture of a time machine. Afterwards, discuss each of the drawings. Create a list of important parts to a time machine. This may include an on-off button, propellers, a power source, a hand scanner, or time controls.
2. Divide the students into at least two groups. Have one group start the building, and the other group make individual dials or parts for the time machine. Half way through, have the two groups switch.
3. Use the cardboard or foam core board to create walls. Sturdy tape will be needed to secure the sides. If possible, these may be taped to the classroom walls for support. A corner space works well for this.
4. Encourage the children to create additional structures using cardboard tubes and paper. Create a roof or ceiling with butcher paper. Use the paints and markers to decorate the time machine.
5. Add the individual pieces with tape. These may be taken off when the time machine is disassembled and given back to the students.
6. After the time machine has been built and has dried, have the children discuss how they built it. Where there problems? What went well? For younger children, discuss new art materials that may have been used. For older students, talk about the process and group effort.

Enrichment Activities for the Time Machine

Time traveling: This is the most important use of the time machine. Have the class go back (or forward) in time. Discuss historical and cultural contexts.

Art history: Talk about the art of different time periods. Have the children create similar styles of art to display near the time machine.



What is History and Why Do We Study It?

SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

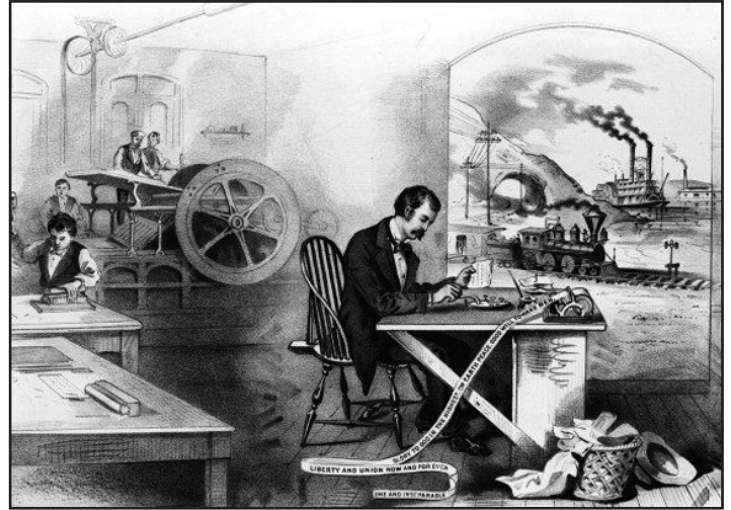
Taken directly from: <http://www.cyberlearning-world.com/lessons/ushistory/lpwhatishistory.htm>

1. Display the following quotations on the board. Using partner pairs or teams, have students discuss among themselves their own interpretation of the quotations (you can assign one or more quotation to a group).

- "I know of no way of judging the future but by the past."* (Patrick Henry)
- "The present contains nothing more than the past, and what was found in the effect was already in the cause."* (Henri Bergson)
- "We are tomorrow's past."* (Mary Webb)
- "The future bears a great resemblance to the past, only more so."* (Faith Popcorn)

2. After allowing several minutes of discussion, have the groups present their interpretations to the class. Discuss these interpretations, and allow students to add to these explanations.

3. Next, have students individually write their own quotation or saying that reflects their view on history or the importance of the past. They can add illustrations if they wish. Have students post these new quotations on poster board and display them around the classroom.



Post-Show Questions

- Lilah tries to change history to keep the Big Fire from spreading, but it ends up having a negative effect on history. If you could change something that happened in the past, would you risk the possibility of the future change? What would you change in history?
- Lilah discovers that Tigg has become a homeless person years after she left on the magic bicycle. What do you think happened with him and Millie right after she left? What choices did he make that led him to this life? How do you think he and Millie separated?
- When Willy meets Thorlaken, he speaks in a way that is very different than the way that we talk. Even though he is speaking in English, what is the difference in the language and why does he speak in that way?
- Things take a turn for the worst when Lilah is sent to the cave with the prisoner, Jed. We can see she is upset when she starts to sing the Black-Eyed Peas song that she heard when she was with Willy. "We try to take it slow, but we're still losing control. And we're trying to make it work and it still ends up the worst. And I'm crazy." What do you think is the importance of these words to Lilah? Why does she sing this song at this particular moment in the story? What is a song that holds significance to you?
- At the end of the play, Lilah and Willy part ways - Willy goes back to his home and Lilah goes off with Millicent. Do you think this was an appropriate ending to the story? What do you think will happen to Lilah? If you were the playwright, would you have written a different ending? How would it end?



Who Said It?

1. You can't faint, not now.
2. I am feeling a little woozy. I haven't eaten since yesterday.
3. Will I have to wear dead animals around my neck?
4. The Reverend puts the folding money in that drawer...
5. Ah-oo-ga! Sha-freaking-zam! Whoo! Yeah. This is what I call a bicycle. Man alive.
6. This is some kind of very strange metal. It's dancing with Power. I feel something fluttery in my chest. But it's cool to the touch.
7. Yeah sure, I'm great. There ain't any jobs. But on the other hand, the world's my oyster."
8. I'm gonna ask you to leave. You can't just walk in and say, "This is my house.
9. Yeah. Let's take some cereal, 'case we get hungry.
10. We can't save everyone. Even if we did save that guy, and I don't know how it could be done, but if we did, look what happened with the Quimby company. We have to be careful.
11. From Iceland come I. But I am borned in England. There the Saxons...droved us. To Iceland we go, and now on to Vinland. I am survivor. Then the skraelings tooked me but I ran and made free.
12. Daddy's not here, he's off on a fur hunt.
13. I'm serious about the city. Tell your father not to sell his land, it'll be valuable.
14. The forward difference can be considered as the difference operator, which maps the function x times h equals t times h , where t is the shift operator.
15. I've never met a madman before, I'm not sure what to expect. The Wallops are crazy, but they're sly and devious."
16. A wrinkle! Your son is lost in time! That's a serious wrinkle!
17. I just want to say that you fellas are doing an excellent job and if thye send you to a place called Gettysburg, that would be a good day for a sick call.
18. Yo, dude, I gotta tell you, this is one butt-kicking bike.
19. If he doesn't write the formula down and hide it in the family trunk, then I won't find it and I-probably-won't invent the bicycle, so it'll cease to exist in mid jump, and then we'll all...die.
20. This is a big house. You can have your own room. You can put on some decent clothes.



Who Said It? (Answers)

1. You can't faint, not now. **MRS. WALLOP**
2. I am feeling a little woozy. I haven't eaten since yesterday. **TIGG**
3. Will I have to wear dead animals around my neck? **LILAH**
4. The Reverend puts the folding money in that drawer... **MILLIE**
5. Ah-oo-ga! Sha-freaking-zam! Whoo! Yeah. This is what I call a bicycle. Man alive. **WILLY**
6. This is some kind of very strange metal. It's dancing with Power. I feel something fluttery in my chest. But it's cool to the touch. **MILLIE**
7. Yeah sure, I'm great. There ain't any jobs. But on the other hand, the world's my oyster." **TYRONE/TIGG**
8. I'm gonna ask you to leave. You can't just walk in and say, "This is my house. **WILLY**
9. Yeah. Let's take some cereal, 'case we get hungry. **WILLY**
10. We can't save everyone. Even if we did save that guy, and I don't know how it could be done, but if we did, look what happened with the Quimby company. We have to be careful. **WILLY**
11. From Iceland come I. But I am borned in England. There the Saxons...droved us. To Iceland we go, and now on to Vinland. I am survivor. Then the skraelings tooked me but I ran and made free. **THORLAKEN**
12. Daddy's not here, he's off on a fur hunt. **ABIGAIL**
13. I'm serious about the city. Tell your father not to sell his land, it'll be valuable. **LILAH**
14. The forward difference can be considered as the difference operator, which maps the function x times h equals t times h , where t is the shift operator. **JED**
15. I've never met a madman before, I'm not sure what to expect. The Wallops are crazy, but they're sly and devious." **LILAH**
16. A wrinkle! Your son is lost in time! That's a serious wrinkle! **LILAH**
17. I just want to say that you fellas are doing an excellent job and if thye send you to a place called Gettysburg, that would be a good day for a sick call. **ARCHIE**
18. Yo, dude, I gotta tell you, this is one butt-kicking bike. **WILLY**
19. If he doesn't write the formula down and hide it in the family trunk, then I won't find it and I-probably-won't invent the bicycle, so it'll cease to exist in mid jump, and then we'll all...die. **ARCHIE**
20. This is a big house. You can have your own room. You can put on some decent clothes. **ARCHIE**

