

LESSON

04

Day 1

As England approached the nineteenth century, sweeping social changes were well underway. The Industrial Revolution put into motion a shift of population from rural to urban areas. Parliament encouraged this process by enacting laws that forced landowners to fence in their farms. Up until this time farmers were allowed to use community property for grazing. A small farmer could make a good living although he had little land of his own. However, once the Enclosure Laws were enacted, small farmers were forced to close down and move to the factories in the city for their livelihood. The cities bulged with great slums where the laborers who worked in horrible circumstances returned home to nightmarish conditions. Government was slow to respond, so the impetus for change was driven by the upper-class.

Parallel with the shifting social environment was a shift in thought. Eighteenth century thinkers mistrusted information not obtained firsthand. They felt the senses gathered information and one's power of reason evaluated the data. By 1800, however, some philosophers said the mind could go beyond reason and grasp things intuitively. Thus, the spiritual and emotional sides of man had their places alongside our reason. Poets and novelists as well as other artists began to place more emphasis on the spiritual and emotional. This and other changes in the content and style of the arts came to be called **romanticism**.

Sometimes the emotional emphasis was self-indulgent. The new freedom to explore the emotions resulted in occasionally wallowing in them. This **sentimentalism** had little merit; but a mellower side had a positive effect. Humanitarians made great strides in this period. Poets, novelists, and a few other socially influential citizens began to focus attention on the plight of the industrial laborers. They influenced politicians and eventually changed laws to protect workers and improve social problems. The "Man of Letters," as the writer was called, felt an obligation to touch the social conscience of his readers, and we should keep this in mind as we examine the literature from this period.

Partly due to the shocking effects of industrialism, and most certainly influenced by the French and German philosophers, a return to nature surfaced during this time. **Primitivism**, as we now label it, was derived from the belief that people are born with a natural inclination to be good; therefore, we are naturally inclined toward God. In time, however, as society imposes more of its evils on the individual, he becomes jaded, and his natural tendencies are suppressed. By returning to nature, it was thought a person could get away from the unnatural teachings of society and get back to God. Since God is found in nature then a return to nature could restore our innate goodness. A side effect of this was the idea of the noble savage whose supposed natural communion with God was never cut off by the trappings of society.

Look up poetry by Samuel Taylor Coleridge or William Wordsworth on the internet.

Day 2

Some writers were already breaking away from the conventions of the eighteenth century. Wordsworth and Coleridge not only broke away in their poems but defined their ideals in the “Preface,” an opening to their small volume *Lyrical Ballads, with a Few Other Poems*. First published in 1798, *Lyrical Ballads* consisted of poems by Wordsworth and Coleridge. The poems were not enthusiastically received, so the poets reissued them in 1800 with an expanded “Preface” in which Wordsworth explained the variations found in the *Lyrical Ballads*.

Among other things, Wordsworth declared a departure in the form, content, and language of poetry. He felt that the traditional language of poetry was too artificial and needed to be toned down. He advocated a choice of words that would clearly communicate the poet’s thoughts. Wordsworth resisted the idea that poetry should consist of flowery language which had been in vogue for the past hundred years.

Secondly, Wordsworth stated that the subject matter for poetry was too restrictive and needed to be expanded to include “incidents and situations from common life.” This directly opposed the previously held notion that subject matter for poetry should be taken from philosophy, religion, or some other highly intellectual and moral plane. Thirdly, Wordsworth’s *Lyrical Ballads* did not all **rhyme**. He stated that rhyme is not an essential component of poetry. Whereas many of Wordsworth’s poems do rhyme, his longer works are mostly written in **blank verse** which is unrhymed **iambic pentameter**. An **iamb** is an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. Five iambs per line constitute iambic pentameter.

William Wordsworth was born on April 7, 1770, in Cockermouth near the Lake District that inspired much of his writing. He was one of five children, a son of an attorney. When his mother died, his father sent the children off to school. Young Wordsworth was sadly separated from his dear sister Dorothy for several years but was later reunited. He and his brothers were sent to school and boarded with Anne Tyson who influenced his life by bringing stability and encouraged his appreciation for natural beauty. Wordsworth’s father died when he was thirteen, and he was left in the care of his uncle. He suffered financial difficulties for most of his early years. It was not until an ailing friend died and left him a sum of money to work on his poetry that his life took a turn. Shortly afterwards Wordsworth met Coleridge, and the effect of that meeting is evidenced in much of their poetry. Wordsworth died on April 23, 1850.

- A. Read Wordsworth’s “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud” in *A British Literature Anthology*.
- B. In which stanza does Wordsworth tell us about his original moment of joy? When does he express the “emotion recollected in tranquility”?
- C. Based on what you have read in Days 1 and 2, what would Wordsworth hope to accomplish by sending this poem to a wealthy industrialist of his time? Write one or two paragraphs explaining your answer.

Day 3

Wordsworth's "The World Is Too Much with Us" is a **sonnet**. Sonnets consist of fourteen lines and can be categorized by their rhyme schemes. This particular sonnet is a **Petrarchan** or **Classical Sonnet** which has a rhyme scheme of **abbaabba** in the **octave** (the first eight lines) and either **cdcdcd** or **cdecde** in the **sestet** (the last six lines). The octave provides a subject and the sestet provides a different look at the same subject, but the two points of view are complementary. The **Shakespearean Sonnet** differs in that the first twelve lines consist of three distinct **quatrains** (four lines) which generally provide three different points of view on a theme. The remaining two lines tie the three points together. Shakespearean sonnets rhyme in the pattern **abab cdcd efef gg**. There are other kinds of sonnets and variations on sonnets are numerous, but the Petrarchan and Shakespearean sonnets are very popular and typical of this form.

- A. Read Wordsworth's "The World Is Too Much with Us" in *A British Literature Anthology*.
- B. What does Wordsworth mean by "The world" in line 1?
- C. What aspect of the world does line 2 show us?
- D. What is the "sordid boon" in line 4?
- E. How would you summarize the meaning of lines 4-8?
- F. Who are Proteus and Triton? What do they represent?
- G. Why does Wordsworth say he would "rather be Pagan"? (Review primitivism from Day 1.)
- H. Define the following terms. (You may refer to the *Literary Terms* found in the back of this book.) Locate examples of each using a poetry book of your choice.
 - 1) blank verse
 - 2) Petrarchan sonnet

Day 4

- A. Read Wordsworth's "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey" in *A British Literature Anthology*. This poem is commonly called "Tintern Abbey." Read the poem carefully. There are three substantial indentations dividing the poem into four sections. If necessary, read each section several times until you understand it. Then do the same for the next section, etc.

The friend he mentions in section four is his sister Dorothy who was a great source of encouragement to him.
- B. Look up any words you don't know: abbey, copse, sublime, corporeal, cataract, suffer.
- C. Knowing what you do about Wordsworth, what do you think he is experiencing in section one?

- D. At the close of section one Wordsworth mentions a Hermit. How does the Hermit fit in at this point?
- E. In general what is section two about?
- F. From the first nine lines of section two the author identifies three harmful conditions that can be remedied by recollections of moments of joy in nature. What are they?
- G. According to the poem what effect does this have on a person's attitude toward other people?
- H. What is the gift Wordsworth refers to in line 15 of section two?
- I. Section three divides itself into two main parts—what he felt at Tintern Abbey as a youth and what he feels now. What is the difference?

Day 5 _____

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born in Ottery St. Mary, Devonshire, on October 21, 1772. He was the youngest of ten children and a voracious reader. His father died when Coleridge was only nine, and he was sent away to school. When 'Col' was around twenty years old he became ill and took laudanum (an opium and alcohol mixture) to relieve his pain. This began his lifelong addiction to opium which caused him great hardships throughout his life. As mentioned earlier, his meeting with Wordsworth was the major influence in the romantic period. Coleridge died on July 25, 1834.

A brief glance at the philosophy of Wordsworth and Coleridge is helpful in understanding their poetry. Gleaning from the philosophy of Keats and others they formed a theory that Coleridge expressed in Chapter 14 of his *Biographia Literaria*. Simply put, one gathers data through the senses, and this data is sent to a part of the intellect called the Fancy. The Fancy is mechanical like a computer and incapable of creating ideas. Next, the organized material goes to the Imagination. First, the Primary Imagination analyzes the data regarding its moral implications (whether or not action should be taken, etc.). The Secondary Imagination, however, is the highest faculty of our minds. It is here that creativity exists, and ideas are formed. Also, the Secondary Imagination is where the mind can intuitively come in touch with God.

The thrust of Wordsworth and Coleridge's poetry was to stimulate the Imagination. They felt that modern industrialists were operating by the Fancy and needed their moral and spiritual levels regenerated. They wrote poetry to do this, but they went in different directions. Coleridge wrote poems about the Imagination intended to open the Imagination. Wordsworth saw God in nature. He felt that poems about his own revelations of God in nature would stimulate others to see Him in nature. This is why Wordsworth is called the nature poet.

Wordsworth's theory of creativity is closely tied to his philosophy. Wordsworth had moments of ecstasy when he saw God in nature, and the emotion was overwhelming to him. He felt that he could not write in this emotional state, and he would wait until his emotions subsided. Then, he would reflect on his experience and regenerate a feeling similar to the original. Wordsworth called this reflective process "emotion recollected in tranquility." It was in this state of vivid imagination that he felt he accomplished his best writing and that he communicated a moment's perception of God.

- A. Read Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" in *A British Literature Anthology*. Read the poem several times and try to trace the path of the river Alph.
- B. Do a little research today and find out about Kubla Khan. Who was he? Where and when did he live? What did he accomplish?
- C. According to Coleridge, Alph is a symbol for the spiritual world, and the dome represents the human mind. Notice all the elaborate imagery in the first stanza. What process is the mind working in?
- D. The information gathered through the senses is sent to the Fancy. At what point do we know that the Imagination begins to work?
- E. At what point do we know that we are in stage two of the Imagination where we can sense the spirit of God?
- F. What do you think Coleridge is saying in the last stanza?

LESSON

10

Day 1

This week you will be writing a compare and contrast essay between the novel *Frankenstein* and a film adaptation. We all know that a film cannot cover an entire novel. There will be plot lines, descriptions, nuances, etc. that are unable to be portrayed in a visual medium. Directors make changes for artistic reasons or in order to streamline the plot. Often, fans of a novel are severely divided on whether a movie has captured the book well. While perhaps frustrating for book lovers, a poorly rendered movie offers wonderful fodder for a compare and contrast essay.

- A. With your teacher's permission, watch the 1931 film version of *Frankenstein*. At the time of this publication it was available for free on YouTube.
- B. As you watch the film, be taking notes on the following questions:
 1. What major changes do you notice in the plot between the book and the film?
 2. Why do you think the director/producer made those changes?
 3. How are the major characters in the film different than the novel?
 4. Given what we've learned about the Romantic period and style, do you think the film is trying to portray that style?
 5. How did the changes in the plot, characters, style, etc. affect the story as a whole?

Day 2

Now that you've seen the film, it is time to begin with a thesis sentence. As we covered previously, a good thesis sentence is the backbone of your essay. Spend some time paring your thoughts down to three main topics of contrast between the film and the book. Your thesis sentence will contain the ideas that: The 1931 film adaptation of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* differs from or accurately portrays the novel in these three ways. The three ways could be three individual characters, or the characters, plot, and style, or three different plot points in the story, or so on.

After you write your thesis sentence, create a rough outline for your essay. Remember that a five-paragraph essay will have an introduction, three main body paragraphs, and then a conclusion.

It will look something like this:

- I. Introduction
 - A. Introduce the novel *Frankenstein*
 - B. Introduce the film
 - C. End with Thesis sentence
- II. Point one of contrast or comparison
- III. Point two of contrast or comparison
- IV. Point three of contrast or comparison
- V. Conclusion
 - Reworded Thesis

A reworded thesis sentence should be included in the concluding paragraph of your essay. This helps to remind the reader of your central argument and gives cohesion to the essay.

Use examples from the novel and the film in each paragraph to support your argument. For example, let's look at the YA novel *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief* and compare it to the film adaptation.

Comparing Percy Jackson: The Lightning Thief Book and Film

A Master Class in Bad Book Adaptations

Percy Jackson: The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan was a groundbreaking YA novel that modernized Greek mythology. It was a highly successful book that introduced young readers to ancient stories they had never encountered before. As a highly successful series, it made sense to turn it into a film adaptation. Unfortunately, when the film was released, it once more proved the old saying that the book is always better. The movie stands as a textbook example of how to butcher a well-loved source material, making it a master class in bad book adaptations. From butchered characterizations to glaring plot holes and a complete disregard for the book's themes, the film adaptation of *Percy Jackson* demonstrated how not to adapt a book.

First and foremost, the characters in the film are practically unrecognizable compared to their book counterparts. Percy Jackson, who in the novel is a sarcastic yet deeply thoughtful character, becomes a generic action hero in the movie. He is no longer vulnerable and insecure, characteristics that made him human and relatable. Instead, he is portrayed as a one-dimensional action figure with zero personal growth. Annabeth, who in the book is a brilliant and capable strategist with an impressive knowledge of Greek mythology, is turned into a bland, secondary character with a forgettable personality. Grover might be the worst adaptation. Instead of a loyal, slightly neurotic satyr with great emotional depth, his character is changed to merely slapstick comic relief. For example, while Grover took his job as a searcher very seriously in the book, in the movie his attempt to hide his legs under a trench coat is played for laughs. These changes turn the film into a generic action adventure flick that could have been about any main character, rather than Percy Jackson.

The plot, too, is mangled in the film adaptation, and any semblance of the book's character-driven narrative is sacrificed for the sake of action scenes. In the novel, the quest to retrieve Zeus's stolen lightning bolt is not just a race against time, it is a journey of self-discovery for Percy. He wrestles with his identity as a demigod and struggles to understand his place in a world of gods and monsters. In the film, however, the story is condensed into a series of action sequences. The movie slashes important plot points, omitting crucial events and characters from the novel. For instance, the climactic confrontation with Ares, a key figure in the book, is entirely absent, leaving a gaping hole in the plot. The film also turns Percy's relationship with his father, Poseidon, into a simplistic narrative device, reducing what should have been a profound emotional journey into a mere footnote. The result is a film that feels rushed and incomplete, as if it were hastily thrown together to cash in on the book's popularity.

Perhaps the most upsetting change in the film adaptation is the complete erasure of the book's themes. The novel explores themes of identity, family, and the complex nature of heroism. Percy's journey is as much about accepting his heritage as it is about completing his quest. The film reduces these complex themes to the most shallow, cliché notions of good versus evil. The film's emphasis on action and visual spectacle completely overshadows the book's message of self-acceptance and the importance of understanding one's roots. Percy's internal conflict over his parentage and his evolving sense of responsibility are barely touched upon, replaced by tired action-movie tropes like chases and explosions. It is clear that the filmmakers were more interested in producing a thrill ride than in faithfully adapting a well-loved book.

In conclusion, the 2010 film adaptation of *Percy Jackson: The Lightning Thief* is a catastrophic failure in capturing the essence of Rick Riordan's beloved novel. What could have been a thoughtful, adventurous tale about self-discovery and mythological wonder instead becomes an uninspired action movie that insults both the source material and its audience. The film's lack of respect for the book's heart and soul makes it a perfect example of how not to adapt a cherished literary work. Hopefully, one day, given Hollywood's love of remakes, a director will come along who understands why the Percy Jackson characters, plots and themes are so loved by the fans and will be able to faithfully capture them in film.

Now that you've created your outline, write your introductory paragraph.

Day 3 _____

Continue writing your essay. Remember to follow your outline and create strong topic sentences for each paragraph.

Day 4 _____

Finish your essay

Day 5 _____

Now that you've finished your essay, read it out loud to help catch any typos or confusing sentences. Make your final edits. Run Spell Check on your essay and also check for punctuation errors. Share your essay with someone!

LESSON

18

Lessons 18-21 Novel Study - *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens.

Day 1

Charles Dickens was born on February 7, 1812, in Portsmouth, England. His early years were full of happy times, but when his father was imprisoned for debt, Charles was sent to work. These were tremendously difficult years for young Charles, and it was from these experiences that he penned many of his novels. With the onset of the Industrial Revolution, Charles wrote about childhood poverty, the lower class, and social injustices.

Dickens is one of the most gifted writers of all time. Many of his novels have been made into movies, such as *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, and the perennial favorite *A Christmas Carol*. Characters from his novels, such as Scrooge, Oliver Twist, and Madame Defarge, have become household names.

A Tale of Two Cities was written toward the end of Dickens' career, and it shows many of his great skills in storytelling. However, critics do not rate it among his masterpieces, perhaps because it lacks Dickens' signature humor and quirky characters. Nevertheless, *A Tale of Two Cities* is among the most popular novels ever written and serves as a good introduction to Dickens, as well as a good representative work of the Victorian period.

When Dickens died in 1870, he had written fifteen novels and several short stories. His tombstone in Westminster Abbey reads, "He was a sympathizer to the poor, the suffering, and the oppressed; and by his death, one of England's greatest writers is lost to the world."

Major characters in *A Tale of Two Cities*:

Jarvis Lorry: an agent of Tellson's Bank who befriends the Manettes

Madame and Ernest Defarge: wine shop owners in Paris, active forces behind the French Revolution

Charles Darnay: a Frenchman who is exiled to England; his real identity is the nephew of Marquis St. Evrémonte

Sydney Carton: a misspent lawyer who is in love with Lucie and saves Charles

Dr. Manette: a physician who has spent eighteen years imprisoned in the Bastille; Lucie's father

Lucie Manette, later Darnay: a pretty young woman with a compassionate nature; the daughter of Dr. Manette

Marquis St. Evrémonte: a cold-hearted aristocrat; Charles Darnay's uncle

Since *A Tale of Two Cities* weaves its story into the French Revolution, it is helpful to know something about the history behind the novel. To acquaint yourself with the background of the novel, as a first day's assignment, find a summary account of the French Revolution in a world history book, an encyclopedia, or on the Internet.

- A. Read Chapters 1-3 of Book I of *A Tale of Two Cities*.
- B. In Chapter 1 what impact did the King and Queen of England and France have on the civil atrocities of the year 1775?
- C. What is the divine right of kings?
- D. What is the prevailing attitude of the people toward one another in Chapter 2?
- E. Where is the coach headed?
- F. Where does Mr. Lorry work?
- G. What conflict has been introduced, if any?

Day 2 _____

- A. Read Chapters 4-5 of Book I.
- B. What is Jarvis Lorry's occupation?
- C. What is Lorry's connection with Paris?
- D. There are several things that connect Lorry with Lucie Manette. What are they?
- E. How does Lorry's dream in Chapter 3 foreshadow the news that Dr. Manette is alive?
- F. Notice Dickens' description of the setting. What is the dominant mood he sets?
- G. Besides the foreshadowing of the blood bath to come, what does the people's response to the spilled wine show us?
- H. Mr. Defarge demonstrates some admirable traits, but what is his underlying response to Dr. Manette's long imprisonment and present condition?
- I. The implicit conflict in the story is alluded to in Chapter 5, Book I, and represented by Dr. Manette's imprisonment. What is the conflict that will become evident in Book II?
- J. What could be the significance of Defarge's little league of Jacques?

Day 3 _____

- A. Read Chapter 6 of Book I and Chapter 1 of Book II. Be sure to read the footnotes, which are very helpful.
- B. How does Dickens compare Tellson's Bank to England?
- C. How does Jerry Cruncher's attitude toward his wife represent Tellson's Bank?
- D. How does the list of Tellson's condemned criminals reflect the condition of England?

Day 4 _____

- A. Read Chapters 2-3 of Book II.
- B. What evidence do we have from Chapter 2 that the charges against Darnay might be false?
- C. What is the general reaction of the people toward Darnay?
- D. Is there a conflict of any real substance yet?
- E. Darnay's acquittal hinges on what important bit of evidence?
- F. How are Darnay and Carton unlike each other?
- G. What is the similarity between Darnay and Dr. Manette?

Day 5 _____

- A. Read Chapters 4-5 of Book II.
- B. What is Carton's attitude toward Lucie?
- C. Does Carton like Darnay?
- D. Does Carton like himself? His life?
- E. We find that Stryver and Carton are old friends. Is their business relationship mutually beneficial?
- F. Why is Stryver called the lion and Carton called the jackal?
- G. Why does Carton insist that he doesn't think Lucie is much to look at?

LESSON

25

Day 1

Lesson 25 Novel Study—*The Time Machine* by H. G. Wells

From 1880 to 1918 Western civilization continued the process of leaving traditions behind but fearing to let go of them. Although Marx and Engels had a few followers in England, their works created a sense of alarm as if such ideas could create cracks in the foundation of society. Freud, moreover, made people wonder if one's mind were subject to forces in the subconsciousness that could not be controlled by reason. Perhaps reality could be a matter of one's perception rather than a precise logical view that must be the same for everyone, like a mathematical formula. Einstein reinforced the understanding that reality is not a constant, as we had always believed. Things that we thought were unchangeable, such as the mass of an object, or time, were actually variable depending on circumstances. Such things as these continued to erode traditional values. Improving technology continued to give men a sense of ordering their environment without the help of traditional ways, values, or help from God.

The changes in society created a strain on traditional literary conventions. Writers began to challenge the commonly upheld practices in form and content. Thus, we see the trends of breaking away from old forms, expanding subject matter and expanding word usage. By 1880, two opposing views of art had emerged. One side held the traditional view that art was meant to comment on and improve society. The other side felt that art should have no restrictions except to express the artist's personal inclinations, which might or might not include opinions about society. Art for society's sake, which is represented by Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*, was challenged by those who favored art for art's sake. Art for art's sake, of course, allowed the artist great freedom of expression. In England the art for art's sake group tended to extremes.

However, there were a good many talented writers who were less extreme, making slight departures from tradition. They were able to bring about change in a way that was noticeable but not offensive. When H. G. Wells published his novella *The Time Machine* in 1895, the world was ready for it. There had been enough scientific and technological advances to make the idea of time travel remotely believable. Furthermore, the artists' expanded freedom in subject matter allowed Wells to address the theory of evolution without fear of public retaliation.

Herbert George Wells, writer, historian and philosopher, was born in 1866 in Bromley, England. An avid reader as a youngster, he earned a scholarship to the Normal School of Science where he was deeply influenced by biologist and surgeon, Thomas Huxley (grandfather of Aldous Huxley, the English writer/philosopher best known for his novel *Brave New World*). Wells questioned the fate of modern society with its technological and scientific advances. He was concerned that these advances outpaced man's intellectual development. For a short while, he joined the Fabian Society, a group of peaceful, social activists seeking democratic reform. In his later years, Wells wrote more about women's rights, war, and capitalism. *The Time Machine* (1895) was his first major work, bringing him much fame. Others are *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1895), *The Invisible Man* (1897), and *The War of the Worlds* (1898). His well-known historical work is *The Outline of History* (1920). Wells died on August 13, 1946.

Major characters in *The Time Machine*:

Time Traveller: the main character who invents and travels in the time machine

Eloi: child-like race of people

Morlocks: small, ape-like creatures with white skin and fur, and large eyes for seeing in the dark

Weena: a female Eloi whom the Time Traveller saves from drowning

- A. Read Chapters 1-2.
- B. How would the discussion about time strike Wells' readers in the year 1895?
- C. What is the main conflict in the story?

Day 2 _____

- A. Read Chapters 3-4.
- B. What purposes do the characters have who surround the Time Traveller?
- C. What new conflict has been added to the story in Chapter 3?
- D. What are you reminded of by the sphinx-like statue and the building with the dining hall?
- E. Could the little childlike people have built these structures?
- F. What does this suggest?
- G. How does the Time Traveller explain the state of civilization he sees in terms of civilization advancing?

Day 3 _____

- A. Read Chapters 5-6.
- B. What are the physical attributes of the Morlocks?
- C. What does the Time Traveller conclude about the existence of the Morlocks and the Eloi?
- D. How does the Time Traveller explain the evolutionary process in reference to his own time?
- E. What mistake has he made regarding the relationship between the Eloi and the Morlocks?
- F. What new conflict has been added to the story?
- G. What are some differences between the Morlocks and Eloi besides their physical features? Include differences in habitat.

Day 4

- A. Read Chapters 7-8.
- B. This time the Time Traveller figures out the relationship between the Morlocks and the Eloi. What is it?
- C. In what way is this world of the future a criticism of Wells' society?
- D. Why are the things in the museum so well-preserved?

Day 5

- A. Read Chapters 9 to the end of H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine*.
- B. How does the loss of Weena affect the Time Traveller?
- C. How does the loss of Weena affect the Time Traveller's chances for escape?
- D. As the Time Traveller moves forward, what happens to the life forms on Earth?
- E. According to the Time Traveller at what stage of this development does mankind begin the process of devolution?

Optional:

With your teacher's permission, watch the old, black and white film version of *The Time Machine* starring Rod Taylor. Discuss with your teacher your reaction to the movie compared to the novel.

LESSON

30

Day 1

This week we will take a closer look at the genre of British humor. While of course, each period enjoyed forms of humor in its literature, the 20th century saw the rise of many world renown humorist authors, such as Douglas Adams, with his *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, and Terry Pratchett, with his satirical *Disc World* series.

British humor is known for its dry wit, subtly, and often a hint of the macabre. It relies heavily on sarcasm and irony, with lots of self-deprecation and clever wordplay and puns. Instead of exaggerated reactions, British humor often employs downplayed responses to extreme situations for comedic effect.

Today we will start with one of the most widely read humorists of the 20th century, **P. G. Wodehouse**, best known for his creation of the feather-brained Bertie Wooster with his remarkably wise valet, Jeeves. Wodehouse wrote more than 90 books, forty plays, and over two hundred short stories. His writing is light and breezy, relying heavily on clever wordplay and ridiculous situations. In his stories, troubles are often light, and everything works out with a bit of luck in the end.

- A. Read “Jeeves Exerts the Old Cerebellum” in *A British Literature Anthology*.
- B. Write a brief summary of the story.
- C. Describe Bertie Wooster and Jeeves.
- D. Give some examples of irony in the story.
- E. Do you believe that the books actually belong to Jeeves’ aunt?

Day 2

- A. The story continues. Read “No Wedding bells for Bingo” in *A British Literature Anthology*.
- B. Write a brief summary of the story.
- C. Give some examples of self-deprecation humor
- D. What was Jeeves’ plan from the beginning?

Day 3

Saki was the pen name of **H. H. Munro**, a British writer whose sharp and witty stories often ended in the grisly macabre. Many of his stories feature wild animals as agents of justice or retribution. His stories mainly have twist endings that surprise and entertain. He enjoyed writing about the foibles of the upper class along with revenge, mischief, and poetic justice.

- A. Read “Down Pens” in *A British Literature Anthology*.
- B. Write a brief summary of the story
- C. What do you think of Egbert’s idea for thank you notes?
- D. What issues did Janetta have with what Egbert dictated in the letter?
- E. What types of humor do you see in this story?
- F. Have you ever had difficulty writing a thank you note? What do you think of Egbert’s point that the really appreciated gift gets the same thank you language as something unappreciated?

Day 4 _____

While better known for his creation of the world beloved Winnie the Pooh, **A. A. Milne** was also a British humorist, and incidentally, also a member of The Detection Club. After taking a degree in mathematics from Cambridge, he then moved to London and joined the staff of the humorist magazine *Punch*. After WWI, Milne wrote several light comedic plays before writing his one detective novel, *The Red House Mystery*.

Today we are going to read a short story by Milne from *The Holiday Round*, a collection of short stories capturing the adventures of a group of friends on holiday together. The comedic situations explore the themes of friendship, and the amusing trials of holiday life. The dialogue is extremely clever with understated humor, leaving the reader to often fill in the punchline.

- A. Read “The Ordeal by Water” in *A British Literature Anthology*.
- B. Write a summary of the story
- C. What examples of self-deprecation humor do you see in the story?
- D. What examples of sarcasm do you see?
- E. What examples of downplayed reaction to an extreme situation do you see?
- F. What does Archie mean by “If we get becalmed we can always throw somebody overboard?”

Day 5 _____

- A. Read “Becalmed,” another short story from *The Holiday Round* in *A British Literature Anthology*.
- B. Write a brief summary of the story
- C. What examples of dry humor do you see?
- D. Which of the humorous short stories we read this week did you find the most amusing?