

THE TIME MACHINE by Marc Zakian for Théâtre en Anglais

READING THE PLAY ALOUD

Work in groups of three or four. Choose the different roles and read the extract aloud. Aim for clear pronunciation, expression and good communication between the characters.

4ème — The Time Machine Demonstration

Scene 1, pages 3–6

Characters:

- Horatio
- Jane Eagle
- Professor Albenstein
- Filby

Start:

FILBY:

Gentleman, and Lady. Pray silence. Welcome to the Royal Society. It gives me great honour to present our distinguished speaker, Mr Horatio Tripp.

HORATIO:

Ladies and gentlemen of the Royal Society—fellow seekers of truth gathered here tonight. We are here to discuss the very fabric of existence. To delve into the impossible mystery: time itself.

End:

HORATIO:

Gentleman—and lady. Remember this day. You are the witnesses to the first ever time travel.

Why this extract?

The scene has four clear characters, short speeches and some humour. Students can practise questions, reactions and dramatic surprise.

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3ème — Life in the Future

Scene 4, pages 15–17

Characters:

- Horatio
- Weena
- Lorin
- Another Eloi or narrator

Start:

HORATIO:

This is a fine spread. A fruit this size would win a prize where I come from.
What is it called?

WEENA:

Good fruit! Eat!

HORATIO:

Yes, it is good. But where does it come from? Who grows it?

LORIN:

It grows, friend. The trees make food, the rivers water. We have what we need.

End:

HORATIO:

These are treasures—history, medicine, science.

He opens a book, but it crumbles into dust.

HORATIO:

Turned to dust. All knowledge gone!

Why this extract?

The language is accessible, but the scene also introduces important ideas about food, work, education and lost knowledge.

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Seconde — Should the Eloi Fight Back?

Scene 7, pages 29–32

Characters:

- Horatio
- Weena
- Lorin
- Eloi 1 or Eloi 2

Start:

HORATIO:

You probably know I come from another time—the past. A world very different from yours.

LORIN:

Morloks and Eloi?

HORATIO:

No—different names. One group had weapons, power and machines. Another group had no weapons and no power.

End:

LORIN:

Peace is better.

The Eloi begin to leave.

HORATIO:

Please don't leave. This is your chance to stop the Morloks killing you.

WEENA:

Eloi not fight. Too afraid.

Why this extract?

The characters express opposing opinions. Students can practise persuasion, disagreement and argument, as well as discussing violence, resistance and responsibility.

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Première — Horatio and the Morlok Overmind

Scene 9, pages 34–36

Characters:

- Horatio
- The Overmind
- Weena
- Narrator or Morlok voice

Start:

HORATIO:

What do you want with me?

OVERMIND:

You build machines. You carry fire. You would destroy our existence.

HORATIO:

You exist because you kill the Eloi. You should be destroyed, for humanity.

OVERMIND:

Is this your message from the past? Your perfect world? Where workers live below, digging underground to serve the masters?

End:

HORATIO:

And you turn knowledge to death. You have no knowledge of humanity, of kindness and love.

OVERMIND:

Everything can be understood, given enough centuries.

HORATIO:

Her name is Weena. And she is braver than all of you.

OVERMIND:

Bravery is inefficient. History proves this.

Why this extract?

This is an intellectually demanding scene. It explores class division, knowledge, power, humanity and whether scientific intelligence can exist without compassion.