2105

About the Show

A class trip to the Natural History Museum ends up zapping the guys 100 years into the future. The Trio run into ray-gun toting robots and meet three mysterious girls who turn out to be their own great-granddaughters!

Introduction

Envisioning the future is a great way for students to stretch their imagination, practice descriptive writing techniques, and explore the genre of science fiction.

Historical Background

Discussing fiction genres can help students identify the elements that make a particular type of writing unique. Since "2105" is set in the future, the show and the book (called *2095*) offer an opportunity to discover or learn more about the genre of science fiction.

Science fiction usually features a plot that is based on speculative scientific discoveries, environmental changes, or life on other planets. Science fiction can also serve as a commentary on current social and economic conditions.

A subgenre of science fiction is futuristic science fiction. Exploring the possibilities of the future continues to be a popular topic and often ignites students' creativity as they consider what technologies and changes may yet develop. Many classic science fiction stories, such as the works of Jules Verne, describe inventions or new technologies that later become reality.

Utopia, from Sir Thomas More's book of the same name (first translated into English in 1551), is the

Curriculum Connections

- science fiction

Subject Areas

- language arts
- science
- social studies



Historical Background *continued*

name commonly given to any society (fictional or experimental) in which economic and social conditions are ideal. The world Sam, Fred, and Joe discover in "2105" has some utopian characteristics (for instance, kids don't spend a lot of time on homework), but it also contains some negative, or *dystopian* aspects (there is no escaping "sellbots," which aggressively market products). Futuristic science fiction is often dystopian, describing society as overly commercialized, technology-dependent, polluted, and totalitarian. Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *1984* are two of the best-known novels that describe societies in which technology has become oppressive and deadly. *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury also presents a world in which creativity and individuality have been eliminated. The popular novels for young people *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle and *The Giver* by Lois Lowry explore similar themes.

Want students to get even more excited about history?



Check out the adventure about the future at

www.timewarptrio.com/adventures/2105/

Wordsplosion and other interactive games to play.

Plentifax 487—the ultimate time traveler's guide—to find out what the Time Warp Trio see in the future!

Cool Books that kids will love.

Activity 1



Back to the Future

In both the book *2095* by Jon Scieszka and the show "2105" (based on the book), the author describes his vision of the future. Students can use this description to imagine their own idea of what the future might be.

Instructions

1. Distribute the "Excerpt from *2095* "and ask for volunteers to read it aloud. Discuss with the class how Scieszka has imagined the future. How likely are the technological innovations he describes? What has changed in society? What has remained the same?
2. Tell students now it's their turn to imagine the future. They can work in groups, in pairs, or individually. First they need to decide if they are going to write a description, draw a picture, write a song, or present their vision in some other way. If students are working in groups or pairs they will need to split up the tasks.
3. Ask students who are writing a description to compose a one-page narrative. It can be a letter, diary entry, or prose. It can be narrated by a time traveler from today or by someone living in the future.
4. Students who are drawing their description should provide as much detail as possible. Have them label their drawing or write a caption to go with it. Students working in groups can create a mural with more than one scene.
5. Have students present their work to the class. Allow time for student feedback. Give students an opportunity to revise or add to their project.

Objectives

- to make inferences from written materials
- to write creatively
- to practice descriptive writing

Materials

- "Excerpt from *2095*" handout
- butcher and/or construction paper
- art and writing supplies

Curriculum Standards

- **NCSS**
  Time, Continuity, and Change: Students will develop critical sensitivities such as empathy and skepticism regarding attitudes, values, and behaviors of people in different historical contexts.
- **NCTE/IRA**
  Students use a variety of technological and informational resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

EXCERPT from *2095*

by Jon Scieszka

We dodged the first bunch of teenagers. They had corkscrew, spike, and Mohawk hair in every color you can think of. But the most amazing thing was that no one was touching the ground.

"They're flying. People in the future have figured out how to fly," said Sam.

A solid river of people flowed past us. An old man in an aluminum suit. A woman with leopard-patterned skin. A class in shiny school uniforms. Everyone was floating a foot above the floor.

"How do they do that?" I said.

"Look closely," said Sam. "Everyone has a small disk with a green triangle and a red square."

The sidewalk was full of floating people of every shape and color. There were people with green skin, blue skin, purple skin, orange, striped, plaid, dotted, and you-name-it skin. The street was packed three high and three deep with floating bullet-shaped things that must have been anti-gravity cars. And all around the trees of Central Park, towering buildings spread up and out like gigantic mechanical trees taller than clouds. Layers and layers of anti-gravity cars and lines of people snaked around a hundred stories above us. New York was bigger, busier, and noisier than ever.

Source: *2095* by Jon Scieszka. Illustrated by Lane Smith. (Puffin, 1995)

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Activity 2

The Museum of the Future

Instructions

1. Have students select and read a science fiction book or short story. You may want to work with the librarian to provide a list of suggested titles (see Resources). You may also want to extend the scope of the list to include fantasy stories.
2. Once they finish reading the novel, have students read aloud a short excerpt that describes the future society or land. Discuss the author's vision of the future. Ask students whether or not they think it could come true.
3. Have each student create a museum exhibit based on the world their book describes. Students can manufacture an artifact, an article of clothing, an animal or other creature from that world; draw or paint a picture; make a sculpture; write and display a diary entry (or other written piece); create a diorama; or write and perform a short script.
4. Have students write captions for their exhibit. Take a "tour" of the museum and have each student introduce his or her exhibit.



Objectives

- to use creativity
- to practice oral presentation skills

Materials

- art and writing supplies

Curriculum Standards

- **NCSS**
  Science, Technology, & Society: Students should have experiences that provide for the study of relationships among science, technology, and society.
- **NCTE/IRA**
  Students read a wide range of literature from many periods, in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions of human experience.

Resources

Recommended Books

For Teachers

Borderlands of Science
by Charles Sheffield. (Baen, 2000)
This book examines how present-day science, from astronomy to physics, inspires our thoughts of the future.

Science Fiction 101: Where to Start Reading and Writing Science Fiction
by Robert Silverberg. (I Books, 2001)
An introduction to the craft and art of science fiction, including 13 classic stories.

For Students

Fiction

2095 by Jon Scieszka. Illustrated by Lane Smith. (Puffin, 1995)
The Trio are zapped into the 21st century and meet their great-grandkids.

Around the World in Eighty Days and ***20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*** by Jules Verne. (Various editions)
Many of Verne's visionary concepts, written in the 19th century, have come true.

The Giver by Lois Lowry. (Houghton Mifflin, 1993) Jonas's community seems to have solved all of society's problems, but Jonas begins to understand what is missing.

My Son, the Time Traveler by Dan Greenburg. (Grosset & Dunlap, 1997)
The Zack File series. Zack meets his own son who has traveled from the future. See also *Trapped in the Museum of Unnatural History* by the same author.

The Time Bike by Jane Langton. (HarperCollins, 2000)
Eddie Hall receives an old-fashioned bicycle from his uncle that enables him to travel through time. One of six books about the unusual Hall family.

Time Cat: The Remarkable Journeys of Jason and Gareth by Lloyd Alexander. (Holt, 2003) Not only can Gareth the cat talk, he can take Jason to any place and time!

The Time Machine by H. G. Wells. (Various editions) The classic novel of time travel to the future.

A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle. (Farrar, 1990) Meg, her brother Charles Wallace, and their friend Calvin travel through space and time in search of the scientist father of Meg and Charles.

Nonfiction

The Museum of Hoaxes by Alex Boese. (Dutton, 2002) Many legends, pranks, and cons were included in legitimate collections before they were revealed to be false.

Remarkable Journeys: The Story of Jules Verne by William Schoell. (Morgan Reynolds, 2002) A biography of the writer whose stories feature inventions and technologies that are now reality.

Science Fiction Pioneer: A Story about Jules Verne
by Tom Streissguth. (Carolrhoda, 2001)
Jules Verne grew up to write about unusual ways to see the world.

The Smithsonian Institution
by May Collins. (Grolier, 1999)
Words and photographs describe the vast array of items in one of the world's most incredible museums.

Web Sites

IS SCIENCE FICTION SCIENCE?
www.pbs.org/kcet/closertotruth/explore/show_01.html
Michael Crichton, David Brin, and Octavia Butler debate the merits of science fiction. Based on the PBS television series *Closer to the Truth.*

RAY BRADBURY ONLINE
www.spaceagecity.com/bradbury/quotes.htm
Visit this site to learn about science fiction author Ray Bradbury.

REALITY UPDATE: THE TOP TEN DREAM INVENTIONS OF THE FUTURE
http://inventors.about.com/library/weekly/aa011599.htm
This list by Mary Bellis updates the progress being made on inventions such as an energy stick, a transporter, a replicator, holograms, and more.

TIME TRAVEL
www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/time/
This companion Web site to the NOVA program "Time Travel" explores whether such travel is scientifically possible.

TIME WARP TRIO
www.timewarptrio.com
This site for kids includes interactive games, fascinating facts, and booklists that help make the past come alive.

WANDS AND WORLDS
www.wandsandworlds.com/
Fantasy and science fiction booklists for children and teens, organized by categories.

Please note:
Although these sites were verified at the time of publication, Web site addresses and content are frequently subject to change.

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