

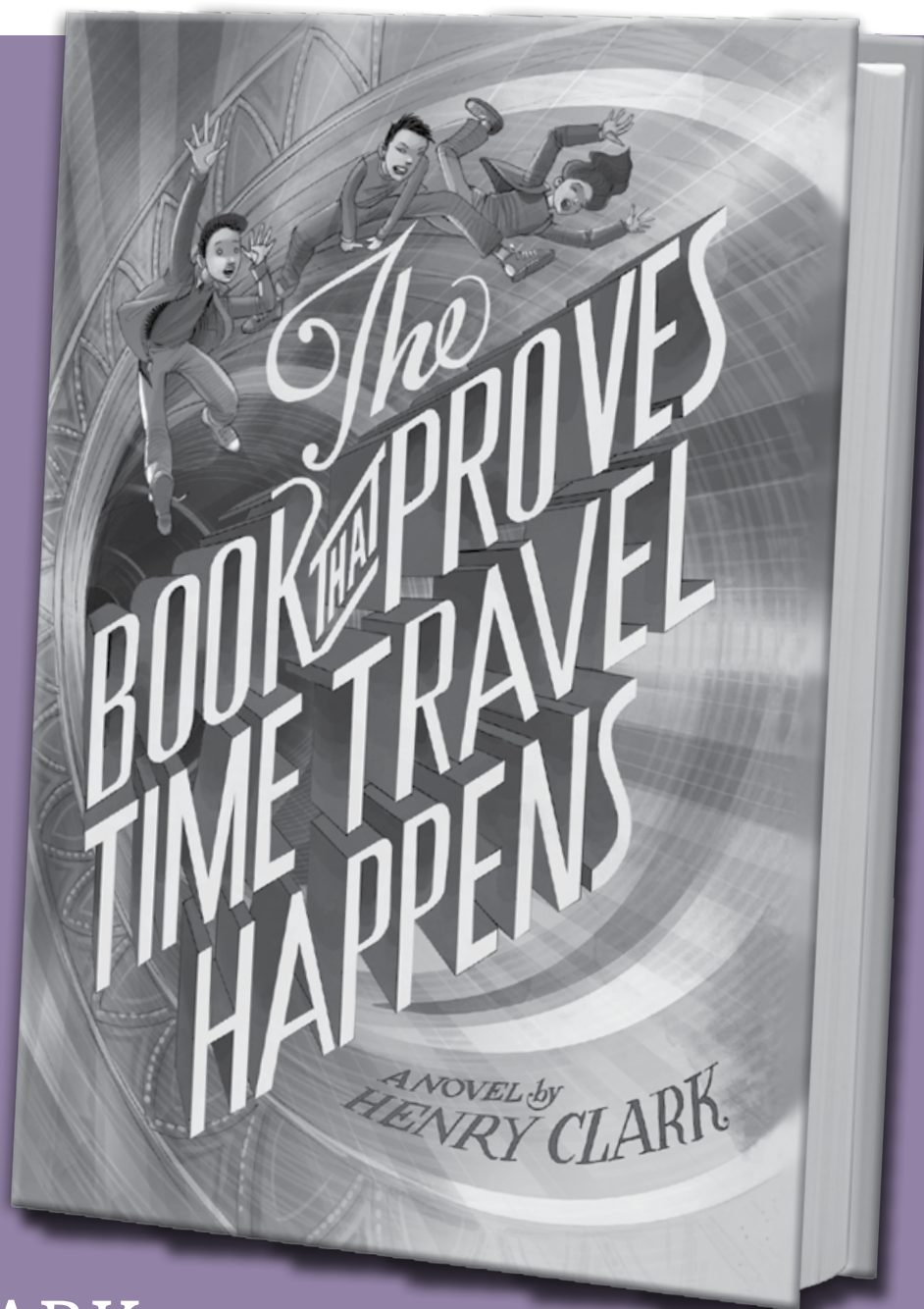
educator's guide

The **BOOK THAT PROVES TIME TRAVEL HAPPENS**

Curriculum connections

- ❖ Language Arts
- ❖ Social Studies
- ❖ Prejudice & Racism
- ❖ Science Fiction

Ages 8-12



by
HENRY CLARK

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Divide the class into small groups and ask them to use books in the library or sites on the Internet to research the *I-Ching*. Instruct students in the groups to consider a decision they must make, and seek advice from the *I-Ching* (ichingonline.net) by asking an appropriate question (For example, What would happen if I ran for class president?). Then have them consider the advice and write a one-page paper about their final decision.

Correlates to Common Core Standards in Language Arts in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-8.2
Research to Build and Present Knowledge W. 5-8.7, 5-8.8.

CLASS DISCUSSION

Explain how the *I-Ching* contributes to the structure of the novel. How does Tom's tee shirt foreshadow the importance of *I-Ching*? At what point does Ambrose begin to understand the power of the *I-Ching* and the Shagbolt? Why might the Shagbolt be dangerous in the possession of the wrong people? Explain what Frankie means when she calls the Shagbolt her family's "crown jewel".

Describe Ambrose and Tom's friendship. What special qualities does each boy bring to the friendship? Frankie travels with the carnival and doesn't have any special friends her own age. Debate whether the boys consider her a friend as they embark further into their time travel adventure.

Explain what Ambrose means when he says, "I lost my best friend, Tom Xui, twice. The first time I just wasn't paying attention." (p. 1) What is the first time that Ambrose lost Tom? Discuss the second time.

Contrast Ambrose and Tom's family. Identify the major conflict in each family. Explain how these conflicts cause the boys to seek answers from a fortune-teller. Frankie tells the boys that Gypsy parents can be difficult. How might she describe her father? What is Mr. Gantos' role in rearing Frankie? How does Frankie need the boys as much as they need the fortune-tellers?

Ambrose is upset and embarrassed that his father is a *trans-temporal*. Tom tries to comfort him, "Your father is just being who he is, Bro. A lot of people hide who

they are." (p. 30) An oxymoron is a figure of speech that uses contradictory words in conjunction. How is "being who he is" and "hide who they are" an oxymoron? Identify other examples of oxymoron in the novel.

The three time travelers encounter bullies in the present and in the past. Who are the bullies in the novel? How do Ambrose, Tom and Frankie deal with them? How does time travel give Ambrose the courage to face the bullies once he is back in Freedom Falls?

Ambrose says that his parents let him go to the carnival because he shows responsibility. Trace times in the novel when Ambrose, Tom and Frankie show responsibility. When are they reckless and show poor judgment?

Explain why Tom is drawn to Dr. Lao and the *I-Ching*. Ambrose says to Tom, "We don't truly believe this stuff do we? At what point does Ambrose begin believing the *I-Ching*? Dr. Lao says the *I-Ching* is "like a compass that points you in the right direction as long as you read it right." (p. 39) What is the role of the *I-Ching* in Ambrose's decision to speak on behalf of his father at the school board meeting at the end of the novel?

Tom Xui's mother pushes him to excel in everything. She wants him to go to Harvard and become a doctor or a concert pianist. He says he would rather be an archaeologist. Explain how his interest in archaeology contributes to his reaction to time travel, and his decision to remain in the past?

Frankie says, "Something we did in the past somehow changed the present. We have to figure out what it was, and go back and fix it." (p. 204) What is it the three time travelers need to fix? How do they fix it?

Explain the concept of "glammering". Discuss how Tom, Ambrose and Frankie would like others to see them. How do others see Hannibal Brody and Orlando Tiresias Camlo? What do they want others to see?

Hexagram 20 is called "Observing & Contemplating". Discuss times in the novel when Ambrose, Tom, and Frankie observe rather than contemplate. How does their success as time travelers depend upon both skills? What is the first hint that Tom is contemplating not returning to the 21st century?

What is symbolic about the Drama Club's production of *The Crucible*? What message is Mr. McNamara



conveying by having the school board meet on the set of the play?

Chapter 25, “Transformations,” begins with the following metaphor: “I was flour going through a sifter; I was grass seed being spread.”

(p. 346) What transformation

is happening within Ambrose?

A reporter for the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* is visiting Freedom Falls and attends the school board meeting in search of a good story. Why is Mr. McNamara so concerned about publicity? Discuss the responsibility of the press to report things accurately. What is an accurate portrayal of Mr. McNamara?

Ambrose must explain Tom’s absence to his family. Why is Gee Gee Pa the appropriate person to tell? How does Gee Gee Pa interpret Tom’s decision as his “greatness”?

Identify the central themes of the novel. What does the reader learn about “differences” and “acceptance”?

Debate the surprise events at the end of the novel. At what point is it obvious that Tom will remain in ancient China? What clues lead to the revelation about Frankie’s father? Which character grows the most by the end of the novel?

In “A Few More Lines from the Author,” Henry Clark says that readers will likely identify many patterns in the book. Other than the *I-Ching*, what other patterns are there? How does this contribute to the mystery and suspense of the novel?

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Key Ideas & Details RL. 5-8.1, 5-8.2, 5-8.3; Craft & Structure RL. 5-8.4, 5-8.5; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 5-8.1, Knowledge of Language L. 5-8.3, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use L. 5-8.5; Speaking & Listening: Comprehension & Collaboration SL. 5-8.1, 5-8.3, Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas SL. 5-8.4, 5-8.6

CLASS ACTIVITIES

Man vs. Man, Man vs. Nature, Man vs. Society, and Man vs. Self are the four types of conflicts in literature. Some novels have more than one conflict. Divide the class into small groups and ask them to identify the types of conflicts in *The Book That Proves Time Travel Happens*. Instruct them to draw a four-frame cartoon strip with narration that best illustrates the conflicts in the novel. Display the cartoon strips and ask students to verbally elaborate on their examples.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Key Ideas & Details RL. 5-8.2; Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-8.2.

Instruct students to use books in the library or sites on the Internet to find a poem that best describes Ambrose’s relationship with his father at the beginning of the novel and another that conveys their relationship at the end of the novel. Allow time in class for students to share the poems.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading Literature: Integration of Knowledge & Ideas RL. 5-8.7.

Henry Clark uses figurative language to create certain images or feelings. Discuss the following simile: “Low branches whipped across the cart’s front like bony fingers lunging from the darkness.” (p. 60) What emotion does this image create? Find examples of simile in the novel that creates feelings of fear, anger, suspense, excitement, elation, etc. Then have them use an appropriate emoticon at the end of each simile.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Language: Vocabulary Acquisition & Use L. 5-8.5.

Read about the various groups of Gypsies, or Travelers in the United States on the following website: smithsonianeducation.org/migrations/gyp/gypstart.html. Take clues from the novel and write a one-page paper that explains which group the Camlo family belongs.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge W. 5-8.7, 5-8.8, 5-8.9.

Frankie says that being schooled at the Carnival is “like being on a field trip every day of your life.” (p. 69) Write a brief article called “The Ultimate Field Trip” that Ambrose or Frankie might submit to *Out of Time*, a journal for the Trans-Temporal community. Encourage peer editing.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-8.2; Production & Distribution of Writing W. 5-8.5.

Though the newspaper reporter promised Mr. McNamara that he would only do a small story, the press likes sensational stories that grab the attention of readers. Hannibal Brody’s fate does lend itself to human interest. Write a front-page story titled “Free Speech Wins” for the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* about the school board hearing regarding Hannibal Brody’s employment. Remember to include who, what, when, where, why, and how. Include quotes from Ambrose, Mr. Brody, Mr. McNamara, school board members, students, and other citizens of Freedom Falls.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-8.3, Production & Distribution of Writing W. 5-8.4.

Hello Goodbye by the Beatles is the song played at the nightly closing of the Carnival. Read the lyrics (azlyrics.com/lyrics/beatles/hellogoodbye.html) and write an essay that Ambrose might write called “Hello Goodbye” at the end of the novel. What is he saying hello to, and what is he bidding goodbye? Cite specific scenes or quotes from the novel to support thoughts.

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Research to Build & Present Knowledge W.5-8.9.

Have students write a persuasive paper about which genre the novel belongs: adventure, historical, realism, or science fiction. They may also consider whether the novel belongs to more than one genre. Cite specific scenes from the novel to support thoughts.

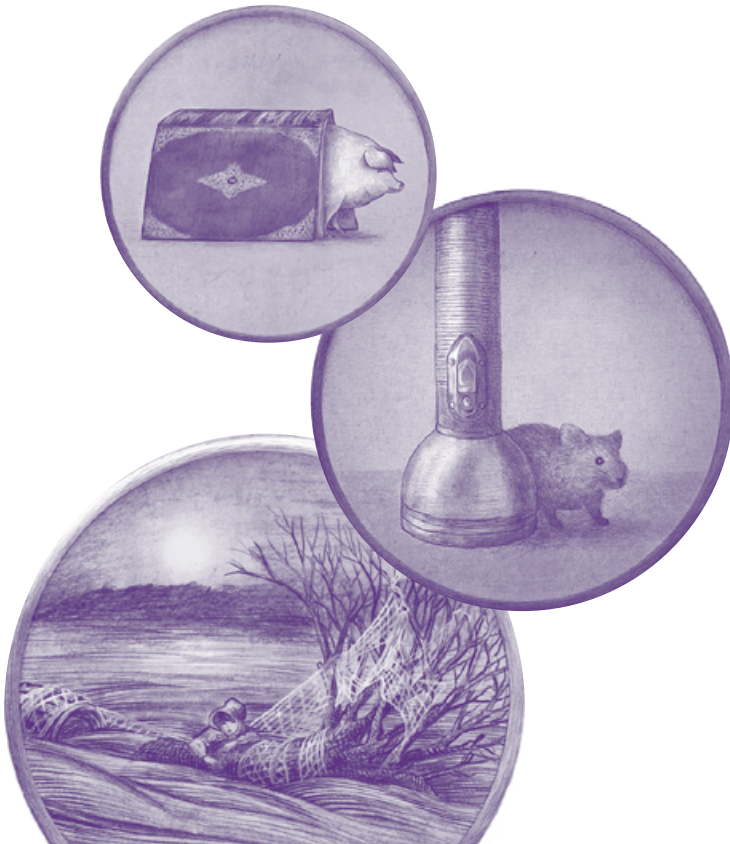
Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-8.1.

VOCABULARY/USE OF LANGUAGE

Students should be encouraged to jot down unfamiliar words and define them taking clues from the context. Such words may include: *fissures* (p. 9), *defiant* (p. 11), *vigorously* (p. 13), *catapulted* (p. 33), *impaled* (p. 65), *cowering* (p. 73), *incredulously* (p. 80), *insolence* (p. 86), *drivel* (p. 134), *colossus* (p. 137), *tarnal* (p. 167), *undulated* (p. 167), *melodeon* (p. 176), *itinerants* (p. 176), *impertinent* (p. 181), *reticule* (p. 189), *edifying* (p. 192), *superfluous* (p. 200), *eradicated* (p. 202), *imperious* (p. 276), *precipice* (p. 317), and *exuberant* (p. 391).

Tom has an interesting way of using vocabulary words as curse words. Consider the meaning of the following words and explain how tone of voice may dictate why they are appropriate curse words in Tom’s mind: *apophenia* (p. 3), *figment* (p. 30), *pedestrian* (p. 30), *fiduciary* (p. 30), *paramecium* (p. 30), *cacophony* (p. 31), *defibrillate* (p. 31), *glabrous* (p. 31), *crepuscular* (p. 31), *protoplasmic* (p. 35), *filibuster* (p. 55), *bicameral* (p. 90), *condescension* (p. 92), *colonoscopy* (p. 185), and *acrimonious* (p. 215).

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Language: Vocabulary Acquisition & Use L. 5-8.4.



about the book



The Book That Proves Time Travel Happens

HC 978-0-316-40617-8

Also available in eBook

This never-before-seen twist on time travel adventure explores the theme of accepting those who are different—and having the courage to join them.

The moment Ambrose Brody steps into a fortune-teller's tent, he is whisked into a quest that spans millennia with his best friend, an enigmatic carnival girl, and an unusual family heirloom that drops them into the middle of the nineteenth century!

The year 1852 is a dangerous time for three non-white children, and they must work together to dodge slave-catchers and save ancestors from certain death—all while figuring out how to get back to the future. Fortunately, they have a guide in the helpful hints embedded in an ancient Chinese text called the *I-Ching*, which they interpret using Morse Code. But how can a three-thousand-year-old book be sending messages into the future through a code developed in the 1830s? Find out in this mind-bending, time-bending adventure!

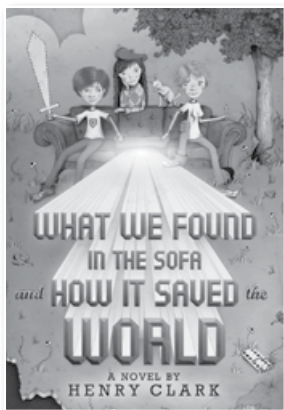
praise for the book

“Where time travel, historical fiction and nonfiction, ancient Chinese design and Morse code collide—keep up, or risk being left in the past . . . or the future.”

—Kirkus Reviews

“A fun, whimsical read . . . this would be a good next step for fans of Jon Scieszka's *Time Warp Trio*.” —*School Library Journal*

also by HENRY CLARK



HC 978-0-316-20666-2

PB 978-0-316-20665-5

Also available in eBook and downloadable audio

“Refreshingly bonkers. It offers thinking kids humor that is neither afraid of the potty nor confined to it.” —Kirkus Reviews

“The novel's swift pace create[s] unyielding suspense . . . for those destined to become Douglas Adams fans it will be hilarious and gripping.” —*Publishers Weekly*

“Fast paced and entertaining . . . an exciting, suspenseful adventure with many unexpected twists.” —*School Library Journal*

about the author



Henry Clark has contributed articles to *MAD* magazine and published fiction in *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*, in addition to acting as the head phrenologist at Old Bethpage Village Restoration, a living-history museum in New York. He lives on Long Island. Visit his website indorsia.com.



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