



The War of the Worlds



*Retold from the H. G. Wells original
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STERLING CHILDREN'S BOOKS
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What Do *You* Think? Questions for Discussion



Have you ever been around a toddler who keeps asking the question “Why?” Does your teacher call on you in class with questions from your homework? Do your parents ask you questions about your day at the dinner table? We are always surrounded by questions that need a specific response. But is it possible to have a question with no right answer?

The following questions are about the book you just read. But this is not a quiz! They are designed to help you look at the people, places,

and events in the story from different angles. These questions do not have specific answers. Instead, they might make you think of the story in a completely new way.

Think carefully about each question and enjoy discovering more about this classic story.

In this story, the Martians come to Earth and try to take over the planet.

1. Do you believe in aliens? If they exist, do you think they would be friendly or hostile?

2. The author says that difficult conditions may have made the Martians crueler and more desperate to stay alive. Do you think the same would be true of humans? What is the most difficult position you've ever found yourself in?

3. The narrator says, "As scared as I was, I also wanted to get a closer look at the Martians." Why do you think he feels this way? Would you have stayed to look at the creatures or run away? What's the scariest thing that has ever happened to you?

4. Why do you suppose the narrator insists on going home instead of staying in Leatherhead like his wife wants? Have you ever done anything that someone asked you not to do?

5. On his way out of London, the narrator's brother stops to save two young women. Do you think this was a brave or a stupid thing to do? What is the bravest thing you've ever done?

6. While the narrator does all he can to survive, the curate does nothing but complain and cry. Do you know anyone like either of these men? Which of them are you more like?

7. When the Martians enter the house where the narrator is staying, the narrator hides in the coal cellar. Do you think this was a good hiding place? Where do you hide when you don't want to be found?

8. The artilleryman says, "Saving humanity isn't enough. We must save our knowledge, too. . . . But we don't want any useless novels or

poetry—just our science and ideas.” Why do you suppose he feels this way? What would you choose to save?

9. When the narrator realizes that the fight is over, he says, “The torment was over. The healing would begin.” Do you think the people of London can ever truly heal from the effects of the invasion? Has anything ever happened to you that caused a big change in your life?

10. At the beginning of the book, the narrator is sure that the military can easily destroy the Martians. How does his opinion change throughout the book? Were you surprised that something as small as bacteria finally killed them? How did you expect the story to end?