

Y8 THE WAR OF THE WORLDS: KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

Key Words

- **Genre:** a style, category or type of literature.
- **Science-Fiction:** stories based on imagined future scientific or technological advances and major social or environmental changes, frequently portraying space or time travel and life on other planets.
- **Foreshadowing:** a literary device in which a writer gives an advance hint of what is to come later in the story. Foreshadowing often appears at the beginning of a story, or a chapter, and it helps the reader develop expectations about the upcoming events. You can think of foreshadowing as a way of giving the reader a chance to make a prediction about what might happen later in the story.
- **Narrative Perspectives:**
 - First person narration – stories told from a character’s point of view; often using ‘I’.
 - Third person narration – stories told by an unseen observer of events; often using ‘he’ and ‘she’.
- **Monologue:** a speech given by a single character in a story. In drama, it is the vocalisation of a character’s thoughts; in literature, the verbalisation.
- **Stage Directions:** instructions in the text of a play indicating the movement, position, or tone of an actor. They may also describe the arrangement of scenery or the sound effects and lighting. They are usually written in brackets or italics.

Key Concepts

- **Imperialism:** the policy of extending a country's power and influence through colonisation, use of military force, or other means.
- **Social Darwinism:** the theory that individuals, groups, and peoples are subject to the same Darwinian laws of natural selection as plants and animals.
- **Convention of Science Fiction genre**
- Aliens, extra-terrestrial lifeforms, and mutants.
- Space travel and exploration.
- Interplanetary warfare.
- Parallel universes.

Key Skills

- **Read and understand** a range of extracts from the science-fiction genre including ‘The War of the Worlds’ and annotate them
- **Analyse the methods** used by the writer including language and structure
- **Understand the context** of TWOTW and how this relates to the writer’s intentions
- **Evaluate the conventions** of the science-fiction genre
- **Identify and analyse** writers’ methods to model script writing
- **Write an original play script**

Help/Support: script writing conventions

- The names of the characters in the play should be recorded at the beginning of the script.
- Instructions for stage setting should be written at the top of the page.
- The names of the speakers are written on the left of the page.
- Extra description / detail for the actor/reader are written in brackets – stage directions.
- The present tense should be used for setting scenes and describing actions.
- Ellipsis (...) can be used to demonstrate that a character is thinking or stuttering. It can also be used to develop suspense.
- Some words can be written in a different font (or underlined) to show that the reader has to emphasise that particular word.

Essential information

‘The War of the Worlds’ was written by H G Wells in 1897. Wells was one of the first writers to explore the science fiction genre.

Wells’ novel is influenced by the political climate of the time, at the height of the British Empire.

A SUMMARY:

- Martians invade England, seeking to colonise Earth, as Mars has become inhospitable.
- They arrive in cylinders on a common in Surrey.
- The Martians attack a group of men who approach them, destroying them with a heat ray.
- Civilisation soon starts to fall apart as panic spreads among the population.
- Man-made guns prove useless against the Martians’ superior weapons.
- The narrator’s brother lives in central London and his letter outlines the panic in the city as people realise their weapons are useless against the Martians.
- People start fleeing London when the Martians start using black smoke – a form of chemical warfare.
- The narrator has fled to Leatherhead to find his wife, but on the way more Martians arrive in their cylinders, and he has to take refuge in an abandoned house, where he shelters with a crazed curate(vicar).
- While he’s there, he studies the Martians and learns that they communicate via telepathy and whistles
- He discovers that the Martians feed on human blood.
- In the end, it is bacteria kills the their immune systems prove incapable of defending them
- The Martians perish, and the survivors begin to rebuild society as things return to normal.