

Jules Verne

Around the World in Eighty Days



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Jules Verne

Around the World in Eighty Days

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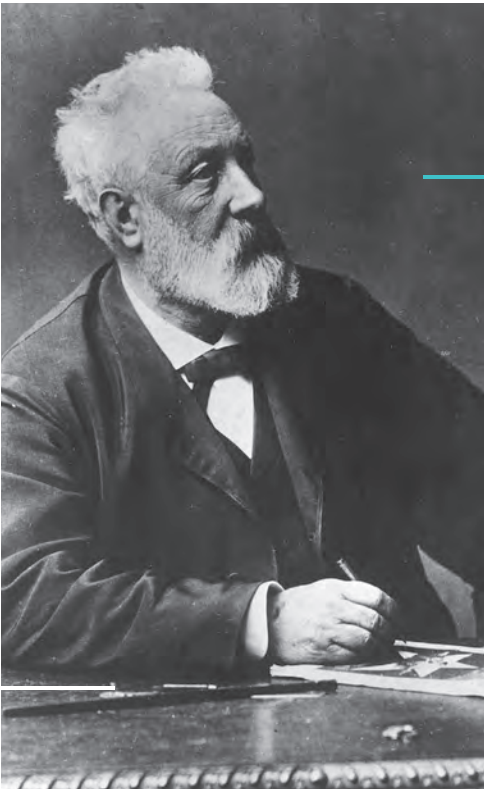
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Jules Verne

Jules Verne was born in 1828 in the town of Nantes, in France.

When he was a boy, he ran away from home and tried to get on a ship to India. The men on the ship found him and sent him back home.

In 1847, Jules's father sent him to Paris to study law.

He did not like the subject very much and his father was angry when he left law school and started writing plays instead. His plays were not very successful at the beginning and he had to find another way to earn more money to be able to take care of the woman he loved, Honorine, a widow with two young children. He became a stockbroker and married Honorine a year later, in 1857. They had a son called Michel. During this time Verne continued writing, and in 1862 he wrote a book about how a man could travel across Africa in a hot-air balloon. One publisher suggested that he wrote an adventure story, using the same ideas.

He did this and in 1863 he wrote *Five Weeks in a Balloon*. People liked this new mixture of fact and fiction and the book was an immediate success.

With the help of his friend and publisher, Pierre-Jules Hetzel, he wrote many books, sometimes two a year. Some of the most famous are: *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (1864), *From the Earth to the Moon* (1865) and *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* (1870).

In these stories his heroes are clever men who are able to find solutions to problems and escape from dangerous situations.

This is also the case in *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1873). Not only was this Jules Verne's most popular story, but he also saw it performed several times as a play during his own lifetime. Many of Jules Verne's stories became classic films, for example *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1954).

Jules Verne was popular in his time because of people's interest in science. Today people are interested to see how many of his imaginary inventions became reality. For example, in *From the Earth to the Moon* the story is very similar to the real events of man's first journey to the moon in the Apollo 11.

Finally Jules Verne travelled later on in his life when in 1884 he did a tour of the Mediterranean. He died in 1905 in Amiens, France. Many people think of him as the 'father' of science fiction.



1 Comprehension Check • Complete the sentences with a question word (you can use a word more than once). Then match the questions to an answer.

who what where why when

1. did Jules Verne do when he was a boy?
2. did he study law?
3. did Jules Verne become a stockbroker?
4. did he write the ideas that became *Five Weeks in a Balloon*?
5. helped Jules Verne to publish his books?
6. was Jules Verne popular in his time?
7. did he publish *Around the World in Eighty Days*?
8. has he been called?

- a** ☐ The book was published in 1873.
- b** ☐ His friend and publisher Pierre-Jules Hetzel.
- c** ☐ He tried to get on a ship to India.
- d** ☐ Because people were very interested in scientific developments.
- e** ☐ He wrote it in 1863, using the ideas of a book about balloon travel written in 1862.
- f** ☐ He had to earn money because his writing was not successful yet.
- g** ☐ The 'father' of science fiction.
- h** ☐ In the city of Paris.

2 Vocabulary • From your understanding of the text about the author, which qualities did Jules Verne have that helped him to be successful? Match a quality to a sentence.

1. practical 2. determined 3. creative 4. courageous

- a** ☐ He ran away from home and tried to get on a ship to India.
- b** ☐ His father wanted him to study law, but he continued to write.
- c** ☐ He knew he had to earn money to look after his family.
- d** ☐ He wrote adventure stories and some of his imaginary inventions became reality.

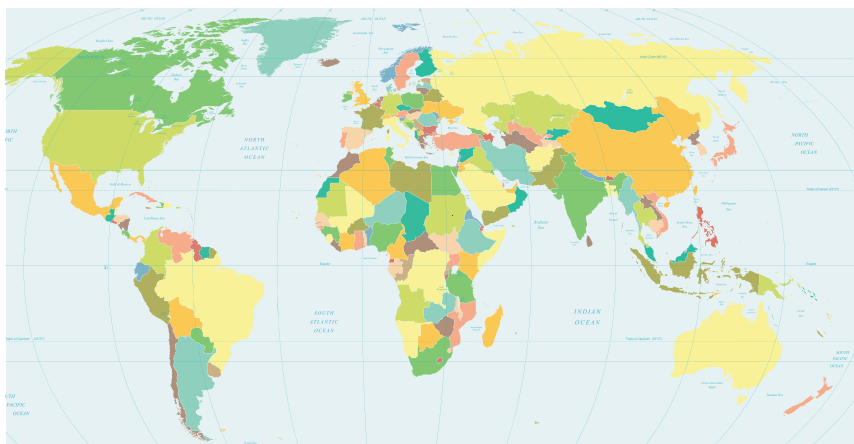
The Characters



From left to right: Phileas Fogg, Passepartout and Inspector Fix

BEFORE YOU READ

1 Match the descriptions of some of the places Phileas Fogg travels to in *Around the World in Eighty Days* to a place on the world map.

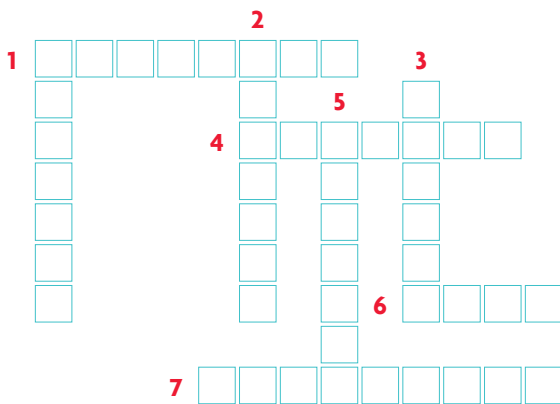


1. **Mumbai** is a busy city in West India. The British called it Bombay. It is the home of Indian cinema, called Bollywood.
2. **Yokohama** was once a small fishing village. Now it is a big port in Japan.
3. The **Suez Canal** is in Egypt. It connects the Mediterranean with the Red Sea.
4. **Kolkata** is a large city in East India. It was once the capital of India under the British Empire. It was called Calcutta. Its port is on a large river.
5. **Hong Kong** is a small country with a big financial centre. It used to be part of Britain, but now it is part of China.
6. The capital city of Ireland is called **Dublin**. It is situated on a river, close to the Irish sea.
7. The beautiful city of **San Francisco** on the west coast of the USA has a lot of hills. It is close to the Pacific Ocean.
8. **Omaha** is a large city in the state of Nebraska, in the middle of the USA. It can be very hot in summer and very cold in winter.

2 Use a dictionary to find the meaning of the words and choose the odd one out for each category, as in the example.

0. Crime: robbery, gentleman, thief, pirate.
1. Detectives: bet, arrest, investigate, clues.
2. Money: cheque, reward, newspaper, cashier.
3. Circus: clown, elephant, acrobat, buffalo.
4. Cowboys: guns, arrows, duel, hat.
5. Trains: carriage, tracks, guard, colonel.
6. Ships: driver, crew, cabin, captain.
7. Making a fire: coal, sail, bonfire, wood.

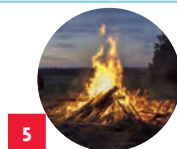
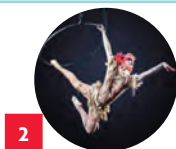
3 Complete the picture crossword with the words from exercise 2.

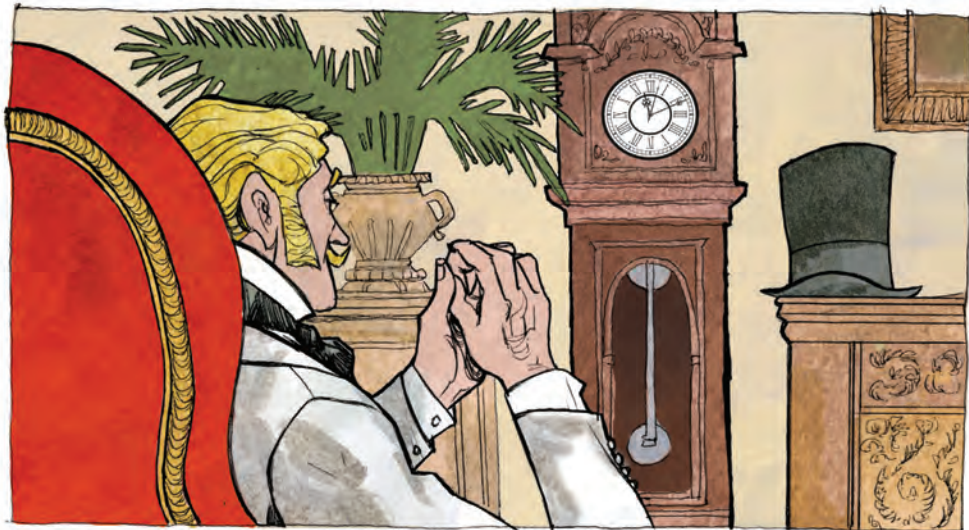


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CHAPTER 1

A Mysterious English Gentleman

Dur story begins in October, in 1872, at a time between eleven and half past eleven in the morning in a comfortable, tidy house in Savile Row¹ in London. The owner of the house, a man by the name of Phileas Fogg, was sitting in his armchair waiting for his new manservant.² Phileas Fogg was a man of habit, that is to say he did the exact same thing at the same time every day. Everything in his house was carefully



track 02

1. house in Savile Row : located in the exclusive area of Mayfair, this was the house of the Irish writer Richard Brinsley Butler Sheridan.

2. manservant : a male servant who is responsible for the personal needs of his employer, such as preparing his food and clothes.

A Mysterious English Gentleman

placed and chosen. His house had a few interesting and expensive objects, but not too many. He had no books, but he was a member of the Reform Club,³ which had some of the best libraries in London.

It must be said that Phileas Fogg was a rather mysterious gentleman. He was a very private man. He had no wife, no children and he never spoke of any relatives. He was very handsome and many people thought he behaved like a true gentleman. He was certainly rich, but no one knew exactly how he made his money. He could name a lot of countries on a world map and he could tell you the most incredible things about them, but did he ever visit any of them? No one knew. He probably travelled at one time, or maybe he only travelled in his head.

The only time Phileas Fogg spoke to other people was at the Reform Club. He left for the Reform Club at eleven thirty every day. He had lunch and dinner there, in the same room, at the same table. He arrived home at midnight. During the day he read the newspapers and played cards. He did not play to win. He played for the enjoyment of the game. Although he often won, he never seemed to keep the money; it is said that he gave it all to charity.⁴ Fogg liked to see his card games as a challenge; a challenge that did not require any physical effort.

So what about Phileas Fogg's manservant? Phileas Fogg's ideal manservant must always be on time. He was the only person anyone ever saw in Phileas Fogg's house. Fogg looked for a man who was completely loyal. His manservant had to do everything exactly as Mr Fogg wanted. In fact, on the same morning, just before our story begins, his last manservant lost his job because he brought Mr Fogg water that was too hot to shave with. And this is where we return to the arrival of Jean Passepartout.

3. Reform Club : a political club in London with services for members. It began around 1832 to give members of the Liberal Party a place to meet and discuss their ideas.

4. charity : an organisation that helps people who are poor or sick.

CHAPTER 1

Phileas Fogg looked up at the hands of the large clock by the wall that counted every second with a loud tick.

There was a knock at the door and a young man of about thirty came in.

‘You say that you are French, but your name is John?’ asked Phileas Fogg, looking at him carefully.

‘Jean, sir. It is the French name for ‘John’,’ explained the young man. ‘My full name is Jean Passepartout. I am an honest man, sir, and I must tell you that I haven’t been a manservant all my life. I was a physical education teacher and a music teacher; then I became a singer. I once rode a horse in a circus, and for a time I worked for the fire brigade in Paris. I found out that a certain Mr Fogg was looking for a manservant.

“He is a very clever, careful man,” they told me. “You won’t find a quieter man in all of England. He does the same thing every day.” And so I came here to ask about the job, in the hope of finally being able to live a quiet life.’

‘Yes, someone at the Reform Club told you this, I believe – probably the same person who told me about you. Do you understand what type of person I’m looking for?’

‘Yes, sir. I do, and I think I’m perfect for the job.’

‘Well then, what time is it now?’

‘Eleven twenty-two, Mr Fogg,’ Passepartout replied, taking his pocket watch⁵ out of a small side pocket.

‘Exactly four minutes late,’ noted Phileas Fogg, looking at his own watch. After a pause, he said: ‘So, let’s say you started working for me as from – eleven twenty-six.’

Phileas Fogg stood up from his armchair, picked up his hat, and went out of the door without saying another word. From this brief introduction, Passepartout was able to make note of his employer.

5. pocket watch :







He was tall, with blond hair and a moustache. He was about forty years old, an elegant man with a gentle face. He was the sort of person who remained incredibly calm, even under pressure. He had gentle eyes that fixed you with a firm stare.⁶ He never seemed upset⁷ or worried. He was a typical Englishman. It was always difficult to guess an Englishman's true feelings.

And our Frenchman? Passepartout had an attractive face and he was incredibly strong. He had blue eyes, and untidy, curly brown hair. He was a sweet person who understood the meaning of true friendship and loyalty.

It was just after half past eleven and Passepartout, who was now alone in his new home, decided to look around. In Phileas Fogg's room his clothes were divided into seasons; each jacket had a number. In the corner, there was a safe⁸ for keeping money, watches and other items. After looking in all the different rooms, he finally came to his own bedroom.

6. firm stare : fixed look.

7. upset : unhappy.

8. safe : a strong metal cupboard with locks in which you keep valuable things.

A Mysterious English Gentleman

Above the fireplace there was an electric clock; it was the same electric clock that Phileas Fogg had in his room. The two clocks ticked at the exact same second. Below the clock there was a piece of paper listing the details of Mr Fogg's day.

8.20: Tea and toast
9.37: Water for shaving (body temperature)
11.25: Brush Mr Fogg's jacket ...

The list told Passepartout everything he needed to do from morning until midnight, when Mr Fogg went to bed.

'Not bad at all,' thought Passepartout. 'A man who is as regular as clockwork!'⁹ This is just what I was looking for.'

9. as regular as clockwork : someone who always does everything on time and in the right order.

THINK!

Read the last sentence of this chapter and answer the questions.

- Which values does it describe: honesty, punctuality, reliability or duty?
- How does Passepartout feel in his new home: unhappy, disappointed or hopeful?
- What is Passepartout looking for in his new master? Choose among these:

*order and routine an interesting life beautiful clothes
wealth, trust and respect excitement and adventure*



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