It’s 1902 and an Englishman witnesses strange fireballs falling from Mars to Earth. The Martians have landed! These octopus-like creatures emerge from their spaceships and terrorize the countryside by burning everything in sight with their heat rays. But there’s more. The aliens become huge, metal monsters that smash whatever gets in their way. Not even the soldiers can stop the machines, and they keep coming. Luckily, the man escapes to London where he discovers that the Martians are dying—they cannot fight off Earth’s germs. Will they come back? No one knows.

About the Author

Herbert George Wells was born in 1866 in Bromley, Kent. As a child, he became a fan of literature while recovering from a broken leg. As a teenager, he was an apprentice to a draper, but discovered he was more suited to academics. So at 18, Wells studied biology at the Normal School of Science in London. His interest in science and the works of Jules Verne inspired his first novel, *The Time Machine*, published in 1895. Over the next three years, he wrote three more science fiction books; including *The War of the Worlds*. It was this story that many listened to on the radio in 1938 and panicked, thinking it was true, having not heard the introduction. Although most recognized as a science fiction writer, Wells was also a social philosopher whose critiques appeared in many nonfiction essays, articles, and books.
Think About What You Know

**Science Fiction** *The War of the Worlds* is just one of H. G. Wells’s classic science fiction stories. To introduce or review the genre with students:

- **Explain:** A science fiction story is made-up. It is based on real or imaginary scientific discoveries and often takes place in the future. In science fiction, anything can happen because no one knows what the future will really be like.
- Then have students share any stories, movies, or television shows they believe are science fiction. Have them use the characteristics to support their ideas. As you talk about each story, help students identify events that could really happen and those that are pure fantasy.
- Invite students to express their opinions about science fiction on **Student Journal, page 3**.

Preview and Predict

Have students look at the front cover, read the title, and then read the summary on the back cover. Say:

- **In this science fiction story, Martians invade Earth. The people don’t know anything about these alien visitors. How do you think that makes them feel?**

Then point out **The Exchange** question on the title page: *Should people worry about the unknown?* Explain that when they finish reading, they’ll share their ideas about this and other questions with a group.

Next, have students complete **Student Journal, page 3** to preview the book and make predictions about the events.

**Prepare to Read**

**Think About What You Know**

Tell a science fiction story you have read or seen. What did you like about it? What didn’t you like?

I liked | I didn’t like

**Preview and Predict**

- Look at the front cover.
- Read the summary on the back cover.
- Read **The Exchange** question on the title page.
- Read page 3.

1. How would you feel if aliens invaded your community? Would you be curious or afraid? Why?

2. What do you think will happen when the Martians land? Will the humans be able to defend themselves?
Use a Reading Strategy

**Cause and Effect Chart** Preview the graphic organizer on *Student Journal*, page 4 with students. Explain that as they read *The War of the Worlds*, they can complete the Chart to show what happens to the narrator and the town because of the Martians. Have students add to their Charts after they finish reading each section.

### Use a Reading Strategy

**Use a Cause and Effect Chart**

As you read each part of *The War of the Worlds*, use a Cause and Effect Chart to show what happened to the narrator and the town because of the Martians.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effects</th>
<th>Causes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Chapters 1–2**  
Martians came to Earth.  
Humans ran screaming in panic and fear. |  
**because**  
They needed a better planet to live on.  
Martians came to Earth. |
| **Chapters 3–5**  
Martians fought better than humans.  
Martians destroyed the town of Woking. |  
**because**  
Martians had machines to help them.  
Bigger machines came to help the Martians fight. |
| **Chapters 6–8**  
People tried to escape by boat. |  
**because**  
Martians were moving across the land destroying everything. |
| **Chapters 9–10**  
Henry died. |  
**because**  
He went crazy and surrendered to the Martians. |
| **Chapters 11–14**  
The Martians died. |  
**because**  
They could not fight the germs on Earth. |
Read the Book

Form the group that will read The War of the Worlds. Plan how the group will read and respond. Some options are:

- **Read with a Group** Group members read an agreed-upon number of pages, complete the corresponding Student Journal page(s), and meet to discuss. When they finish the book, they meet again for The Exchange. The group can use the planner on Student Journal, page 2 to establish meeting times.

- **Read Independently** Group members read the book on their own and then meet for The Exchange. The group can use the planner on Student Journal, page 2 to establish the meeting time.

- **Guided Reading** Read aloud the summary at the beginning of each chapter to give students an overview of the chapter. Use the Before You Move On questions to check comprehension as students read. Use Look Ahead to set a focus for reading the next set of pages. At the end of each section, assign the appropriate Student Journal page. Discuss the page before starting the next section. Establish a date for The Exchange and record it on the planner.

Whichever option you choose, use pages 5–9 for an at-a-glance view of Student Journal pages, as well as answers to the Before You Move On questions.
**Chapters 1–2**

**ANSWERS TO “BEFORE YOU MOVE ON”**

**PAGE 5**

1. **Narrator** The man who tells the story, or narrator, is a human from Earth. How do you know? Reread page 3.
   He uses “we” and “us” when talking about humans and himself. He uses “them” to refer to the Martians.

2. **Conflict** Martians wanted to go to Earth. Why? They couldn’t live on planet Mars much longer.

**PAGE 12**

1. **Character** Ogilvy discovered the ball of fire was a spaceship with men inside. He wanted to help them. What does this show about Ogilvy?
   It showed that he was a kind, brave, and curious person.

2. **Summarize** The narrator had never seen anything like the spaceship so he called it the Thing. What did the Thing look like?
   It looked like a huge tin can. It was very large and shaped like a cylinder.

**PAGE 20**

1. **Cause and Effect** How did the people react to the Martians? The people were scared, shocked, and fascinated. They couldn’t keep their eyes off of the Martians.

2. **Conclusions** Reread pages 14 and 15. Why did the narrator start to think the Martians were dangerous? He felt a sudden chill when he saw the Martian come out of the spaceship. Peoples’ faces turned from surprise to horror.
The War of the Worlds

Chapters 3–5

ANSWERS TO “BEFORE YOU MOVE ON”

PAGE 24
1. Details Why did the narrator think the Martians couldn’t hurt people?
   They moved very slowly and he thought they were too weak to leave the pit.

2. Character Reread pages 23–24. What can you tell about the narrator’s wife?
   She was kind because she worried about her husband. She believed him.

PAGE 28
1. Conflict Reread page 27. Why did the soldiers argue about how to fight the Martians?
   They had not seen the Martians. They did not know the best way to fight them.

2. Inference The narrator’s neighbor said, “Those Martians will cost a lot of money!” Why does he say that?
   It will take a lot of money and resources to clean up the mess they are making.

PAGE 33
1. Conclusions The soldiers shot a cannon at the Martians. Did it work? How do you know?
   It did not work. The Martians continued to fight. They blew up the college.

2. Inference Reread page 31. The narrator did not tell the landlord what was going on. Why?
   Maybe he thought the landlord would not believe him or would not give up his horse if he knew the Martians were coming.

PAGE 38
1. Comparisons Reread page 35 and look at the picture on page 36. How was the new monster different from the other monsters?
   The new monster was a huge machine. It could smash trees and houses. The other monsters were small and weak outside of the spaceship.

2. Character’s Point of View The wife was silent at dinner. Why wasn’t she happy to be away from the Martians?
   She knew that her husband had to go back and it was dangerous, she had to leave her home, and she was scared about the future.

Respond to Chapters 3–5

Cause and Effect Chart
Review what happened in Chapters 3, 4, and 5. Add your causes and effects to the Chart on Journal page 4.

Think It Over
Write the answers to these questions.
1. Personal Response Imagine that someone you knew very well told you they had seen Martians. Would you believe them? Why or why not? How would you react?

2. Confirm Predictions What was your prediction? Did the Martians continue to kill people? Write what happened.

3. Comparisons What were the differences in the way the Martians and the humans fought?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Martians</th>
<th>Humans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Used huge machines with heat-rays</td>
<td>used foot soldiers and small machines like guns and cannons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stayed inside the spaceship or machines</td>
<td>walked outside the ships or machines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attacked right away</td>
<td>did not attack unless they were attacked first</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The War of the Worlds

Chapters 6–8

ANSWERS TO “BEFORE YOU MOVE ON”

PAGE 42
1. Summarize Reread pages 40–41. How did the soldier survive?
   He fell in a hole when he fought the Martians. The Martians used a heat-ray, but it missed him.

2. Inference The narrator wondered if the Martians were inside the machines. What do you think will happen if the Martians drive the machines?
   They may be protected and have the power to kill many people at once.

PAGE 45
1. Summarize Reread page 43. Why did the narrator and the soldier leave the house?
   The Martians were too close to the house and had destroyed everything around it. They wanted to try to find a safer place.

2. Metaphor Reread page 45. Use your own words to tell the meaning of “Bows and arrows against lightning”.
   Bows and arrows are useless against lightning—just like guns and cannons are useless against heat-rays.

PAGE 52
1. Character A Martian gets shot. The other Martians don’t try to help. What does that tell you about the Martians?
   They did not care about each other or have feelings. They only thought about how to take over Earth.

2. Conclusions Why did the people go into the water? Was it a good idea? Why or why not?
   There was nowhere else to hide. No, because they could not stay underwater for long. When they ran out they got killed. Also, the heat-ray made the water too hot to stay in.

PAGE 57
1. Paraphrase The narrator said the Martians were “in no hurry” to destroy Earth. Tell what this means in your own words.
   They were planning something so they were doing things slowly.

2. Comparisons Reread pages 56–57. How was Henry different from the narrator?
   Henry was more upset and worried about the Martians than the narrator. The narrator was calmer.
The War of the Worlds

Chapters 9–10

ANSWERS TO “BEFORE YOU MOVE ON”

Page 62

1. Inference The Martians were putting people inside their machines. Why did this make the narrator more scared than he was before?
   The Martians took the people alive. He didn’t know what they were doing with them. He assumed the worst.

2. Cause and Effect Reread pages 60–61. Why were the narrator and Henry trapped in the house?
   Because a cylinder landed on the house and it was caving in around them.

Page 67

1. Inference The Martians were out of the machines digging. Why were they digging? Reread page 63.
   They were making the pit bigger.

2. Conclusions Reread page 67. Why did the Martians need machines?
   They only had heads and brains, not bodies. They needed machines to be their bodies and do the work they couldn’t.

Page 76

1. Cause and Effect Henry left the house and let the Martians take him. What happened to Henry? How do you know?
   Martians will suck his blood out. We know because they did this to all the humans they caught.

2. Conclusions The narrator heard no more sound and the red weed was growing. Why did this make him think he could escape?
   He thought the Martians left because they weren’t making noise or eating their weeds.

Respond to Chapters 9–10

Cause and Effect Chart

Review what happened in the chapters. Add a cause and an effect to your Chart on Journal page 4.

Think It Over

Write the answers to these questions.

1. Personal Response The narrator tried to comfort Henry and be positive about their situation. Has anyone ever helped you get through a disaster or hard time? Tell about it.

2. Comparisons How were the Martians the same as humans? How were they different? What would you change about them to make them more like humans?
   The Martians were different because they did not have bodies. They were the same because they used machines.

3. Suffixes A suffix is a word part that comes at the end of a word. It can help you figure out what a word means. For example, -ly means “in this way.” Find safely on page 60. Henry and the narrator could leave the house in a safe way. Find quickly, perfectly, and slowly on pages 63–64. Explain how the machine and the creatures moved.
   They moved in a quick, perfect, and slow way.
The War of the Worlds

Students Journal, page 9

Pages 77–93

Chapters 11–14

ANSWERS TO “BEFORE YOU MOVE ON”

PAGE 82

1. Conclusions Reread page 79. At first the soldier did not know who the narrator was. What made him remember?
   The narrator said he was going to Leatherhead. The soldier remembered that the narrator’s wife was there and that they had met.

2. Character’s Point of View Reread pages 81–82. Why did the narrator think the soldier’s plan would not happen?
   He thought the soldier was not realistic. The people would not be able to escape the Martians.

PAGE 87

1. Sequence The germs on Earth killed the Martians. How did the narrator discover that the Martians were dying?
   First, he heard strange noises. Then he noticed a machine turned on its side and another one not moving. The red weed was turning brown. The sad howling stopped. Finally, he saw birds eating a dead Martian.

2. Inference Reread pages 84–85. Why did the howling stop?
   The last Martian that was howling died.

PAGE 91

1. Plot Where did the narrator’s wife go to find him? Why did she go there?
   She went home because she still believed that he was alive.

2. Fact and Fantasy Look back at pages 88–89. What happened that often happens after a real disaster?
   Strangers helped the narrator who was in trouble. Help came from other countries. Family members got back together.

PAGE 93

   People learned that there was life on other planets. They also learned that people could try to go to other planets.

2. Author’s Purpose The story took place before people went to the moon. Why do you think the author included the picture on page 93?
   The picture shows the first person to walk on the moon, 67 years after this story took place. That was part of the narrator’s dream.

Respond to Chapters 11–14

Cause and Effect Chart


Think it Over

Write the answers to these questions.

1. Personal Response The soldier tried to protect the people. Do you know anyone who has served in the armed forces? What does that person think about helping his or her country? Would you join the armed forces? Why or why not?

   ________________________________________________________________

2. Narrator’s Point of View The reader hears everything that happens from the point of view of the main character. He tells the story in the first person, by using I, we, and our. Do you think that point of view is good for this story? Explain.

   ________________________________________________________________

3. Comparisons The narrator thought about the future at the end of the story. Reread page 93. Compare his picture of the future to the world today.

   People have landed on the moon, but no one has landed on Venus or Mars. Some things that the narrator thought would happen did happen.

   ________________________________________________________________
Allow time for groups to meet for The Exchange. If you plan to participate, use these tips for guiding students in discussing the big question:

**Should people worry about the unknown?**

1. The narrator thinks about life on other planets, but most people do not. How is he affected by the Martian attack differently than others?
   - He is very frightened about what the Martians are capable of while other people laugh at him because they do not believe there is life on other planets.

2. The people on Earth do not know the Martians are coming to attack. How would this story be different if they had known?
   - They would have prepared for the attack by packing up their belongings instead of having to rush and leave many things behind. The army would have known what to expect and, therefore, been more prepared to handle the unknown creatures.

3. Imagine the rebuilding after the Martians die. Describe a disaster that you have heard of or others have experienced. If a disaster like this happened in your community, how could you help?

### Extend the Reading

**Write News Articles**

Have students imagine that they are news reporters in the U.S. at the time of the Martian invasion. Have them write daily news articles about the arrival of the first Martians, the appearance of the “metal monsters,” and the final scene in London.

**On the Radio**

Have partners choose, review, and discuss a chapter. Then they can make up radio announcements warning the public about the attack. One student may want to describe the action while the other does sound effects.

**Research Mars**

Tell students that H. G. Wells wrote this story around 1886. Then invite small groups to research recent discoveries on Mars in newspapers and magazines. Have them take notes, and then share with the class other details that could be added to the story.