

Once Upon A Time-Traveller

Ever since HG Wells wrote **THE TIME MACHINE 15853** (KS4) in 1895, time travel has been a popular theme in children's fiction. Even before then Charles Dickens was tormenting poor old Scrooge with visions of the past and the future in **A CHRISTMAS CAROL 575** and Mark Twain had a nineteenth century American transported back to AD 528 and the court of King Arthur in **A CONNECTICUT YANKEE AT KING ARTHUR'S COURT 4273**.

Often time travellers find themselves transported to historical times very different to our own where computers were brains and blackberries were something you ate:

In **KING OF SHADOWS 16245** (KS2) by **Susan Cooper**, Nat, a young actor at the Globe Theatre is transported back to the time of Shakespeare as he lies suffering from bubonic plague in a modern day hospital. Tolly returns to his ancestral home, Green Knowe, where he encounters three of his ancestors who lived during the reign of Charles II in **THE CHILDREN OF GREEN KNOWE 15379** (KS2 & KS3) by Lucy M. Boston. Peter and Kate find themselves catapulted back to the eighteenth century and befriended by a reformed cut-purse (thief) when a trip to a laboratory goes very wrong in **GIDEON THE CUTPURSE** by **Linda Buckley-Archer** (KS3 coming soon).

In **THE STOVE HAUNTING 16664** (KS2) Daniel is drawn back to his previous existence as a kitchen skivvy in the time of the Tolpuddle Martyrs in the 1830s. It is only when a clock strikes 13 that Tom discovers that the small backyard has been transformed into a beautiful sunlit garden in Phillippa Pearce's **TOM'S MIDNIGHT GARDEN 16274** (KS3). There he meets Hatty and comes to realise that he is back in the Victorian era.

George finds himself in London during World War Two in **BLITZED 16525** (KS2) by **Robert Swindells**. Along with a group of homeless children he struggles to survive.

Johnny Maxwell also goes back to the time of the Blitz in **JOHNNY AND THE BOMB 16031** (KS3 & KS4), by **Terry Pratchett**, when he befriends an old bag-lady who is not as mad as she seems.

Some stories, like the **BOX OF DELIGHTS 15532** (KS3), are more magical than realistic. Here Kay is transported through time and space when an old Punch and Judy man entrusts him with a magical box. And in the **STRAVAGANZA** (KS3) series the time travellers wake up in Talia, a version of 16th century Italy that is, according to the author, **Mary Hoffman**, 'more Italian even than Italy'.

STRAVAGANZA: CITY OF MASKS 16550

STRAVAGANZA: CITY OF STARS 16498

STRAVAGANZA: CITY OF FLOWERS coming soon

Other stories have the time traveller appearing in our world, like Jeremy Strong's Viking, Sigurd, who causes trouble when he turns up in The Viking Hotel owned by the Ellis family in **VIKING IN TROUBLE 16228** (KS1).

To make things even more difficult, in **THE INDIAN IN THE CUPBOARD** (KS2 & KS3) series, the time travelling characters are not only transported forward in time but also reduced to the size of a small plastic toy!

THE INDIAN IN THE CUPBOARD 15876

THE RETURN OF THE INDIAN 15957

THE SECRET OF THE INDIAN 15969

THE MYSTERY OF THE CUPBOARD 15772

THE KEY TO THE INDIAN (coming soon)

In **CHARLIE BONE AND THE TIME TWISTER 16387** (KS3), Charlie has to help Henry Yewbeam get back to 1916; the problem is the boy who sent Henry into the future is still alive but he's now over 100 and great-grandfather to Charlie's arch-enemy - Manfred Bloor. Then there's eight-year-old Barney who finds a caveman living at the bottom of the quarry that's used as a rubbish dump in **STIG OF THE DUMP 15062** (KS3) by Clive King. And finally two teenaged boys witness an 18th century drummer boy marching into the present day through a crack in the earth in **EARTHFASTS 16599** (KS2 & KS3). The candle-end he leaves behind acts as a wedge in the door of time, after the boys help him find his way home.

Another version of the theme is the distortion of time, as in **TANGLEWRECK 16714** (KS3), where Time Tornadoes are whirling people out of their own time never to return, and a woolly mammoth turns up in the Thames! Terry Pratchett takes a look at time and history in **THE THIEF OF TIME 16425** (KS4), and the making of a clock that is so accurate that it will stop time itself.

For travel into the future we have **THIEF 15911** (KS2 & KS3) by Malorie Blackman in which Lydia is propelled forward in time after running onto the moors when she is wrongly accused of stealing. There she discovers a world where computers dominate and a wicked tyrant rules her hometown. The **BACK TO THE FUTURE** (KS3) trilogy has 17-year-old Marty travelling forwards as well as back in time in a machine invented by mad scientist Dr. Emmett L. Brown; the action jumps from 1985 to 1955, 2015 and 1885. In the first book Marty travels back to 1955 and accidentally interferes with his parents' first meeting; he then has to make sure they fall in love or else he will never be born.

BACK TO THE FUTURE 15606

BACK TO THE FUTURE 2 15671

BACK TO THE FUTURE 3 15672

Time travel is often used in the Douglas Adams Hitchhiker books. Particularly **THE RESTAURANT AT THE END OF THE UNIVERSE 15165** (KS4) in which Arthur Dent is taken forward in time to the end of the universe and then back to the beginnings of man. And time travel is the main theme in **DIRK GENTLY'S HOLISTIC DETECTIVE AGENCY 16554** featuring the time-travelling professor, Urban Chronotis.

A life-prolonging drug given to him by his Uncle Lipton is what allows Dano to travel through time in the novel **TIME TRAP 15534** (KS2 & KS3). They both escape from a meaningless existence in the year 2079 to experience life in the past.

Let's finish with a bit of science and Einstein's theory of relativity (don't be scared) - as explained through the adventures of Uncle Albert and his niece Gedanken in **THE TIME AND SPACE OF UNCLE ALBERT 15978** (KS2 & KS3) by **Russell Stannard**.

Don't forget "*The only reason for time is so that everything doesn't happen at once.*" (Albert Einstein)

Denise James