

# 'war of the worlds' by hg wells essay sample



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

I believe that sci-fi is a genre that allows the readers imagination to flow at its fullest. Sci-Fi asks the question ' what if? ' The reader does not know what is in store for them unlike romance novels where they are mostly the same. Sci-Fi novels and films tend to be about the future and what lies in wait for them. Films such as ' Star Wars' show this brilliantly as they have space-flight, new weapons such as lightsabers and new species of animal such as Ewoks. This film allows us to be drawn to it easily as it is interesting as well as futuristic.

Some people have even taken the film so seriously that they have become of the religion Jedi, which shows just how well these films are perceived. I have heard somewhere as well that the book ' War of the Worlds' by H. G Wells has a radio report that the aliens have landed and when they played it in America over the radio everybody believed it which shows just how people thought about aliens and change. The novel ' War of the Worlds' is definitely a Sci-Fi story as it was the first ever Sci-Fi book written, it covers the matter of Aliens landing which at that time was never thought of around the world.

The book also made people think what if aliens did land. It helps to know what year a book was written as you will then know how farfetched it is for the time that it was written. With ' War of the Worlds' it is very useful to know as it is the first time this genre has ever been written in the world. This book was written at just the right time I believe as the turn of the century was coming up and as we all know everyone has their own crazy ideas of how the world is going to end at the climax of each millennium.

Due to it being the end of the century this idea took the people by surprise and they all wanted to know what would happen when the aliens invaded Earth as it was believed that this would happen. It was coming to the end of an era as well with Queen Victoria who had ruled for around fifty years. She was growing older and it was accepted that she would be dying soon leaving the greatest empire in the world and possibly the only defense against the alien invasion leaderless.

This made people panic even more than they were from the thought of invasion. Another factor of worry was that Britain had been colonizing the world with armies and had made nearly all the world theirs. The worry was that the aliens would begin colonizing the world and leave no humans alive except for a couple of slaves. There were also a lot of inventions being made at the time which led people to think what if these inventions were so good that we could make contact with aliens and lead them back to Earth.

Technology scared people at the time, it is like old people not using computers because they believe they are evil or the bringers of the apocalypse which some people do believe. So knowing the historical background of a book helps for us to realize what people at the time would of felt like reading the book. I think that the author H. G Wells chose the right genre of story to write about at this period of time. It is interesting for the Victorian reader seen as it is a completely new genre and nothing like this had ever been written before.

The subject of Aliens landing on Earth and colonizing was playing on the fears of the people living at that time, especially British people, this was

because the British had been colonizing other countries for decades and decades and they were worrying something would do it to them. Another fear at that time was the fact that it was coming to the end of an era, The Queen(Victoria) was dying, it was the end of the 19th century, therefore it wants to make them read on to see what will happen in the future.

He begins the story by looking back at events to imply that this has already happened and he survived, sentences such as " The storm burst upon us six years ago now" this says that he has survived and is about to tell us a true story, the sentence is also quite a strong sentence as well as it says straight away that something has suddenly sprung upon the Earth making the reader think this could happen at any time.

The opening sentence of the whole book " no-one would have believed" akes the reader instinctively know that something strange has happened which makes them want to read on, in the hope that they will find out what has happened that is so strange and unbelievable. The way in which the first two pages are written seems extremely boring to us as it just goes over information we already know about other worlds and space, but for the Victorian reader this has to be explained as most of them knew nothing about Space or the subject of this book.

Most modern people would just put this book on the shelf for the rest of their lives after the opening two pages as it is just full of complex words and long sentences such as " inundate, secular, attenuated" and phrases like " The immediate pressure of necessity has brightened their intellects. " These are all very, very, very, very boring. In the last proper paragraph on page thirty

one he implies that everything will be alright, he then in the next few lines reveals that everything is not going to be alright when he says ' So some respectable dodo in the Mauritius might have lorded it in his nest, and discussed the arrival of that shipful of pitiless sailors in want of animal food, " We will peck them to death tomorrow, my dear" this shows that the dodo believed that they would destroy the sailors when in the end the sailors killed and ate every dodo leaving them extinct, he is comparing the humans to the dodo saying that the humans believe they will destroy the Martians when really they won't.

I think that the Author H. G Wells chose a philosopher for his main character as it allows him to make the Victorian reader believe what he is saying rather than thinking he is just a crazy Victorian peasant, philosophers were also quite well respected which helps a lot in the long run as well. He is married so that the Victorians don't think that he is unsociable and mad(after all he did lose his hat).

Introducing characters with the role of Vicar and Doctor allows Wells to express his opinion at Victorian lifestyles as they were very church-going and mostly catholic, therefore he can make the Vicar be a wimp who is scared and completely unhelpful rather than a rock for people to lean on. Doctors were well paid in those days which means they are clever which to Victorians means highly rated in social-life. He can do the same with the doctor as he can the Vicar.

The aliens are presented through this story as un-remorseful beings which will kill as soon as they are given the opportunity to do so. This makes the

Victorian reader want to read on to find out if the aliens can actually be defeated, Wells throughout most of this hooks the audience in with fear and hints of something happening, lines such as " It is still a matter of wonder how the Martians are able to slay men so swiftly and so silently"

This says that lots have died and more are still to die, which makes the modern reader want to read on as well as the Victorian reader. The way Wells starts with a lecture may seem boring now but it had to be done at the time it was being written so to make people understand what was happening, it does not really help to influence the reader to read on as it is extremely boring. He also has occasional digs at the Victorians as well saying that he has to do this as they do not understand themselves what they think they understand.

We know this thanks to the sentence ' Yet so vain is man, and so blinded by his vanity, that no writer, up to the very end of the nineteenth century, expressed any idea that intelligent life might have developed there far, or indeed at all, beyond it's earthly level" The sentence says no writer writes like this so if you want to know something new then read on this book which I feel helps. The language of this story seems old-fashioned and long-winded to us as the 21st century reader as we are used to more event happening books which leads to more short, snappy sentences rather than sentences such as ' greyish billowy movements, one above another, and then two luminous disc eyes.

Then something resembling a little grey snake, about the thickness of a walking stick, coiled up out of the writhing middle, and wriggled in the air

towards me- and then another" having all these long descriptive words would have most likely fascinated the reader at this time but now we do not want to know as much and it bores us. Wells also uses very complex sentences with lots of long words included in the sentence. " The secular cooling that must some day overtake our planet has already gone far indeed with our neighbour.

It's physical condition is still largely a mystery, but we now know that even in this equatorial region the midday temperature barely approaches that of our coldest winter. " This sentence really does bore me, and there is still more of it in the paragraph, I think I would probably put the book down at that point or leave it for a while which I did with the book " Lord of the Rings" by J. R. R Tolkien. I have come back to that book and am now reading the final book of the three, I feel these sentences do nothing for the book now and would have failed to do so for Victorians as well.

The book is very definitely written in first person for the whole story, I don't feel this adds to the suspense of the story but makes it more interesting as we know the aliens do not just land and blow everyone to pieces leaving no one left but a bunch of psycho aliens. Knowing he lives means that we want to find out why he survived and also how he survived which people do do. This definitely makes me want to read on, words such as(on page seventeen paragraph two) " I think everyone expected to see a man emerge-possibly something a little unlike us terrestrial men, but in all essentials a man.

I know I did. " This confirms he is writing in first person as he says I know I did. I think that the rest of the book compares well to the first seven chapters

of the book. It keeps the interest if not builds the interest in the book and as more and more events conclude the reader becomes more and more hooked on the book, having the role Wells gave himself helped the story to be believable a lot more as he is actually a very important person for these times and very well respected, we could say he is a man who would be listened to.

I think on a whole the book is very well written and has a good use of language which hooks the reader in well. It has quite a slow start as the story actually only commences on page three, up to then we have just been getting descriptions which do not help massively. In all I believe that the Author H. G Wells is successful in getting you to read on just as long as you do not drop out after the first three pages.