

Unit 3: Are aliens real?



H.G. WELLS'

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Bob: It's ten past the hour, I'm Bob Baffle and you're listening to Tuesday Night Talk. I've got Gretel on the line. Gretel?

Gretel: Hi Bob, I had to call, I've just seen these lights in the sky ...

Bob: Yes, they're called stars, Gretel. You're not going to tell me you think they're UFOs are you? Do you believe in that crazy aliens and UFO stuff?

Gretel: But they're still ...

Bob: Gretel, Gretel, Gretel, those wacky alien stories are always proven false. They're from crackpots — no offence, Gretel — who just want attention. There's no science behind it. Astronauts have never seen aliens. There is no evidence, only rumours and fairytales.

Gretel: But Bob, the lights are still there, they're low, they're circling my ...

Bob: People see aliens because they want to see aliens. Gretel, never believe something unless it can be proven!

Gretel: Bob! Bob! They've landed in my backyard, right next to the clothesline! Gotta go!

Bob: Gretel? Gretel? Well, there goes another loopy one. Must be a full moon tonight. Our next caller ...





The War of the Worlds

by H. G. Wells

BOOK ONE **THE COMING OF THE MARTIANS**

CHAPTER ONE **THE EVE OF THE WAR**

No one would have believed in the last years of the nineteenth century that this world was being watched keenly and closely by intelligences greater than man's and yet as mortal as his own; that as men busied themselves about their various concerns they were scrutinised and studied, perhaps almost as narrowly as a man with a microscope might scrutinise the transient creatures that swarm and multiply in a drop of water. With infinite complacency men went to and fro over this globe about their little affairs, serene in their assurance of their empire over matter. ... Yet across the gulf of space, minds that are to our minds as ours are to those of the beasts that perish, intellects vast and cool and unsympathetic, regarded this earth with envious eyes, and slowly and surely drew their plans against us.

Is It a Bird? Is It a Plane?

When a new alien movie hits the big screen, reports of alien activity often increase. A new book on aliens can have the same effect. Many of these reported sightings happen at night, or when the person is driving along a deserted road.

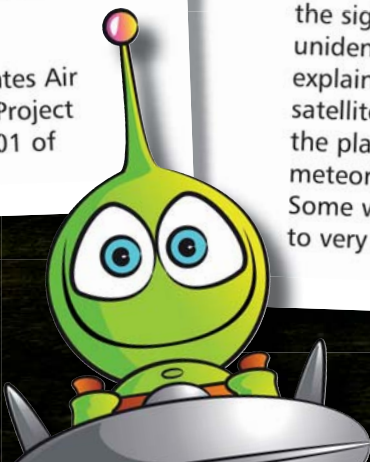
During World War II, many British and American pilots said they saw bright shining balls near their aircraft. They called them 'foo fighters', after a comic that was popular then.

Between 1947 and 1969, the United States Air Force studied 12 618 UFO sightings in 'Project Blue Book'. They discovered that only 701 of



the sightings were really unidentified. The rest were explained as aircraft and satellites, weather balloons, the planets Venus or Jupiter, meteors, or unusual clouds. Some were also put down to very good imaginations!

This photo of a Japanese fighter plane, taken in 1945, is said to show two 'foo fighters' in the distance.





In the texts

1 What do the texts on pages 24–25 have in common? Circle one.

introduction

author

topic

conclusion

2 Match each text to its type.

Bob and Gretel's dialogue

poster

H.G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds*

radio transcript

Is It a Bird? Is It a Plane?

article

The War of the Worlds, Chapter 1

narrative

3 Describe each text and explain what information it gives about the topic.

a Radio transcript

b Poster (not the movie)

c *Is It a Bird? Is It a Plane?*

d *The War of the Worlds, Chapter 1*

4 a Rate each text on a scale of 1 to 5 for believable information, where 1 is *most believable* and 5 is *least believable*.

radio transcript ☐

poster ☐

Is It a Bird? Is It a Plane? ☐

The War of the Worlds, Chapter 1 ☐

b Why is the text with the highest rating the most believable?



c Rate each text on a scale of 1 to 5 for interest and entertainment.

radio transcript

poster

Is It a Bird? Is It a Plane?

The War of the Worlds, Chapter 1

d Why is the text with the highest rating the most interesting and entertaining?

5 With a partner, read the radio transcript, taking turns to read each of the parts.

First, read without using the text's punctuation to guide the way you read.

★ Done

Second, read with the pauses and inflections as shown by the punctuation.

★ Done

6 Highlight an ellipsis (...) in the transcript. In this text, they show interrupted speech.

Why was Bob Baffle always interrupting Gretel?

7 Bob Baffle has an opinion about aliens and UFOs. How does his language show this?

Give examples.

8 Study the first sentence in *The War of the Worlds, Chapter 1*.

a Rewrite it as several sentences.

b Does this improve the original text? Explain your answer.





Read and learn

1 Write definitions for these words.

a keenly:

b intelligences:

c mortal:

d scrutinised:

2 Read *The War of the Worlds*, Chapter 1 and answer true (T) or false (F).

☐ Mankind was not worried about intruders from space.

☐ Our minds are just like those from outer space.

☐ Aliens like us and care for us.

☐ Aliens want what we have.

☐ Aliens are very smart.

3 What causes an increase in reports of aliens?

4 What are foo fighters?

5 How many UFO sightings were found to be real objects between 1947 and 1969?

6 What makes the poster frightening?

7 Who was H.G. Wells?

8 What is technicolor?



Your turn

- I** An exposition argues for or against something. It tries to persuade the reader. Write an exposition about aliens — decide to argue for or against the existence of aliens. Use the texts on pages 24–25 for background information.

Write a strong title.

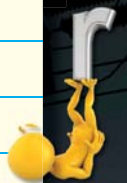
Introduce the topic and state your point of view.

Make at least three supporting points and back each one up with evidence.

Summarise your point of view.

An exposition argues for or against something. It has:

- the author's point of view
- arguments with supporting evidence
- persuasive words
- a conclusion
- a recommendation for further action.



Persuasive writing

- 1** Evaluative language uses words which place a value on the topic, eg *His argument was useless. It was completely false!* Write three sentences using evaluative language to persuade your reader that it is unwise to believe that aliens can visit Earth.

- 2** Emotive language uses words which play on people's emotions, eg *The Aliens approached the defenceless, terrified people in the deserted farmhouse.*

Write three sentences using emotive language to convince your reader to donate to a charity that protects stray animals.

- 3** Rhetorical questions ask the reader about something, but they don't expect an answer, eg *What would any sane person think?* The answer is usually obvious.

Rhetorical questions focus attention on a topic. Draw lines to connect the halves of each rhetorical question.

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| a What do you | must I say this? |
| b Why would | take me for? |
| c Would you like that | who's counting? |
| d How many times | to happen to you? |
| e But | of yours? |
| f What business is it | someone believe that? |

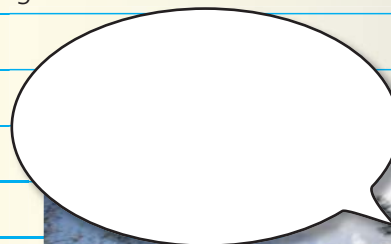
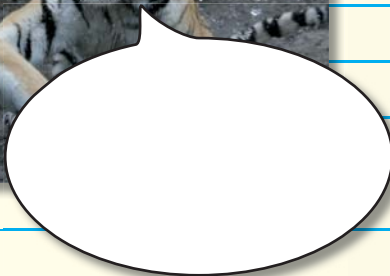
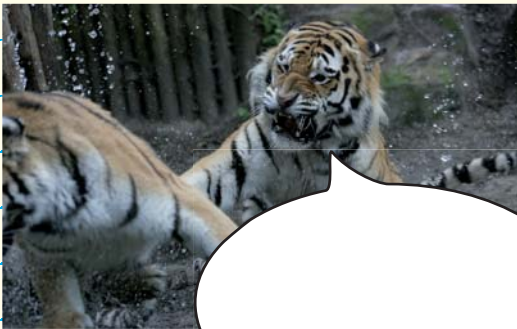


- 4** **Modality shows how strongly the writer feels about a topic.** High modality language uses words that show strong feeling and meaning, eg *We must study this before more people are scared. Surely this can't go on!* A writer uses high modality, low modality or a position in between. Use words from the word bank to convince someone to see your favourite film.

Modal verbs	must	might	should	could	will	may
Modal adverbs	surely	rarely	only	definitely	clearly	

- 5** **Commanding language is very persuasive, eg *You have to be more aware!***

Give each character some commanding language.



- 6** **Involving language gets the reader to believe he or she is part of a problem or solution, eg *We can all help. We can share the job.*** Write three sentences which will get your friends to join you in watching out for aliens.