

The War of the Worlds

H. G. Wells

What happens to human importance when Wells makes us the creatures under the microscope?

TOTAL TIME

PASSAGE

30 minutes	Humans become the observed species
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FIND THE ANCHOR TEXT

Use the Anchor Text Table of Contents in the Enhanced Reader to open the START anchor. Then use the dropdown to select the END anchor.

SECTION / LOCATION	Book One, I · The Eve of the War
START	No one would have believed in the last years of the nineteenth century
END	failed to interpret the fluctuating appearances of the markings they mapped so well.
PASSAGE ID	sec-wow-01

THE MOVE

Use analogy to reverse perspective

WHY THIS PASSAGE

Wells begins by comparing humanity to creatures observed under a microscope, reversing the usual assumption that humans are the observers and masters. The analogy shrinks human importance before the Martians even arrive.

MARK

Underline the language that places humans in the position of specimens rather than observers. Circle the words describing the intelligence or perspective of the beings studying us. Star the sentence that most sharply reverses human superiority.

NOTICE

- What assumptions about human importance does the microscope comparison attack?
- How does the analogy change the reader's position before any Martian violence occurs?
- Why is being observed more unsettling than simply being attacked?

THINK

Answer provisionally: What happens to human importance when Wells makes us the creatures under the microscope? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response to: What happens to human importance when Wells makes us the creatures under the microscope? Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and explain why.

STRONG ANSWER	The microscope analogy reduces humanity from observer and ruler to specimen. Before the Martians attack, Wells has already made human importance relative by imagining a superior intelligence studying us as casually as humans study smaller life.
EVIDENCE	Use language of observation, specimen-like scale, intelligence, or the comparison between Martians and human scientific observers.
WATCH FOR	Do not say the analogy merely makes the Martians seem smart. Its larger effect is to reverse the assumed hierarchy of observer and observed.
SOLO	Read the exact passage independently.
SUPPORTED	Use narration and sentence highlighting while reading the same passage.
LISTENING	Listen to the exact passage; visual following is optional. Same question and evidence demand.

STUDENT PAGE · SAME PASSAGE, SAME THINKING

The War of the Worlds

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What happens to human importance when Wells makes us the creatures under the microscope?

START ANCHOR	No one would have believed in the last years of the nineteenth century
END ANCHOR	failed to interpret the fluctuating appearances of the markings they mapped so well.

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OPEN THE MARKED PASSAGE IN TUMBLELIT

SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration + highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the exact passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. **MARK** - Underline the language that places humans in the position of specimens rather than observers. Circle the words describing the intelligence or perspective of the beings studying us. Star the sentence that most sharply reverses human superiority.
2. **NOTICE** - What assumptions about human importance does the microscope comparison attack? How does the analogy change the reader's position before any Martian violence occurs? Why is being observed more unsettling than simply being attacked?
3. **THINK** - Answer provisionally: What happens to human importance when Wells makes us the creatures under the microscope?
4. **WRITE** - Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.

Use evidence from the assigned passage. Show what you noticed and how the text supports your interpretation.