

The War of the Worlds

H. G. Wells

Why does Wells end the invasion by making the smallest organisms stronger than the strongest machines?

TOTAL TIME

PASSAGE

30 minutes	The conquerors are defeated by bacteria
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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 Two, VIII · Dead London
START	I came upon the wrecked handling-machine halfway to St. John's Wood station.
END	Slain, after all man's devices had failed, by the humblest things that God, in his wisdom, has put upon this earth.
PASSAGE ID	sec-wow-04

THE MOVE

Read reversal of scale as thematic argument

WHY THIS PASSAGE

The Martians possess overwhelming technology, yet they are defeated by microscopic organisms they never considered. Wells reverses scale so completely that power shifts from giant machines to invisible life, turning the ending into an argument about the limits of dominance.

MARK

Underline the language describing Martian technological strength. Circle the language describing the tiny organisms that defeat them. Draw an arrow showing the reversal in which the 'smallest' becomes more powerful than the 'strongest.'

NOTICE

- What kind of power has seemed decisive for most of the invasion?
- Why are bacteria a particularly humiliating enemy for the Martians?
- How does the ending change the novel's idea of what it means to be powerful?

THINK

Answer provisionally: Why does Wells end the invasion by making the smallest organisms stronger than the strongest machines? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response to: Why does Wells end the invasion by making the smallest organisms stronger than the strongest machines? 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 ending reverses the novel's apparent scale of power: enormous machines and advanced invaders lose to microscopic organisms. Wells turns technological dominance into something limited by biology and environment.
EVIDENCE	Contrast descriptions of Martian strength/technology with the tiny organisms that defeat them. The strongest answers explain why the humiliation of scale matters.
WATCH FOR	Do not answer only that germs kill the Martians. Explain how the small-over-large reversal changes the novel's definition of power.
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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Why does Wells end the invasion by making the smallest organisms stronger than the strongest machines?

START ANCHOR	I came upon the wrecked handling-machine halfway to St. John's Wood station.
END ANCHOR	Slain, after all man's devices had failed, by the humblest things that God, in his wisdom, has put upon this earth.

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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 describing Martian technological strength. Circle the language describing the tiny organisms that defeat them. Draw an arrow showing the reversal in which the 'smallest' becomes more powerful than the 'strongest.'
2. **NOTICE** - What kind of power has seemed decisive for most of the invasion? Why are bacteria a particularly humiliating enemy for the Martians? How does the ending change the novel's idea of what it means to be powerful?
3. **THINK** - Answer provisionally: Why does Wells end the invasion by making the smallest organisms stronger than the strongest machines?
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.