

Read and find out**Que. What does the third level refer to?**

Ans: The world between desire or a dream and reality is the third level. We construct a fantasy world for ourselves and periodically try to elude to it. Most of the time, it depicts the straightforward past of our ancestors, who, in our opinion, were happier. It is an escapism world that one enters to escape the issues, concerns, anxieties, and tensions of the present.

Que. Would Charley ever go back to the ticket-counter on the third level to buy tickets to Galesburg for himself and his wife?

Ans: Man seeks temporary release from the stress of his current existence through time travel. Charley had also built a fantastical world. So, in order to purchase tickets from the third level to Galesburg, Illinois, he converted all of his savings into currency of 1894. The third level did not exist, therefore he was unable to locate it again.

Reading with insight**Q. Do you think that the third level was a medium of escape for Charley? Why?**

Ans: Time travel is man's means of escaping the uncertainty, fear, and worries that characterise modern life. Man occasionally looks for solace in his fantasies and his wistful memories of nicer times in the past. Yes, Charley used the third level as his means of escape from the crazy rat race of modern society.

Q. What do you infer from Sam's letter to Charley?

Ans: Sam's letter demonstrates how much people want for a simpler, less stressful, and happier time. In time travel, he had also discovered relief from the stress and haste of contemporary life. Sam had mastered the ability to travel back in time to the era of his forefathers, whose standard of living he believed to be superior to their current state.

Q. The modern world is full of insecurity, fear, war, worry and stress. What are the ways in which we attempt to overcome them?

Ans: Man frequently imagines a world that lies somewhere between his desire and reality and finds solace there by mentally transporting himself. Another method for reducing stress is time travel. We go back in time to a period that we perceive as being calmer and happier. Also frequently used as a means of escaping the oppressive present are nostalgic memories.

Q. Do you see an intersection of time and space in the story?

Ans: Yes, the story clearly shows an intersection of time and space. Firstly, the first two levels of Grand Central Station were located in the present time while the third level existed in the 1890s. Secondly Charley and his wife, Louisa, live in the present time yet Charley goes to get old currency to buy tickets to go to the Galesburg of 1894. The old architecture of the platform at the third level is different from the platform of the modern times. The archaic manner of dressing by the people and the newspaper, The World, dated June 11, 1894 also overlap with Charley's real time world and

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existence. Finally, the letter that was mailed to Charley's Grandfather on 18 July, 1894 highlights the intersection of time and space.

Q. Apparent illogicality sometimes turns out to be a futuristic projection? Discuss.

Ans: It is true that apparent illogicality sometimes turns out to be a futuristic projection. A good number of scientific inventions sounded ridiculous and absurd till some brilliant minds gave them a concrete shape. Before the Wright Brothers invented the first aeroplane, nobody could have dared to believe that man could fly. There are many other examples of inventions which were conceived in dreams but now are part of our everyday reality. All this emphasizes that fantasies of one point of time that seem illogical may turn out to be revolutionary things that change the future of the mankind. It would not be far-fetched to think about railway stations fitted with time-machine devices from one era to another. It is just a matter of time.

Q. Philately helps keep the past alive. Discuss other ways in which this is done. What do you think of the human tendency to constantly move between the past, the present and the future?

Ans: Besides philately, there are numerous other ways to keep the past alive. Collecting historical artefacts, paintings and statues in a museum, collecting and reading books, collecting stamps, first day covers, etc. are all a few ways of revisiting history.

Fond memories of the past are often kept alive through photographic collections, letters, etc. Man seeks refuge in the nostalgic memories, the happier times of the past. He transports himself to the world by travelling through time to escape the present. In fact, he is constantly moving between past for escape, and present and future.

This capacity to oscillate between the past, present and future is a great intellectual gift. This human tendency enables him to plan for the future in the present by reaping benefits from the past. Such a tendency helps in ensuring acceptance of the impact of important decisions taken at any point of time and learning from them.

Q. You have read 'Adventure' by Jayant Narlikar in Hornbill Class XI. Compare the interweaving of fantasy and reality in the two stories.

Ans: In 'Adventure' Jayant Narlikar expressed that many worlds exist simultaneously though they appear to be separated by time. He conveyed that the other world also existed and prospered with the world we are aware of.

In The Third Level, Charley, a young New York commuter wandering Grand Central Station by accident, finds a gateway that leads to the past of 1894. Charley attempts to escape the rat race by buying a one way ticket to his childhood town of Galesburg, Illinois. But circumstances forced him to postpone his plan to escape to the past.