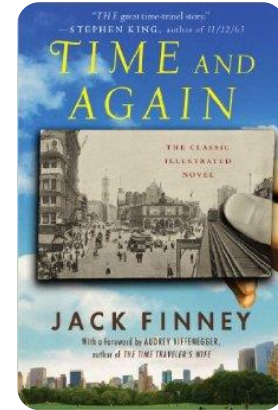


Title: Time and Again
Author: Jack Finney
Grade Level: 8th Grade

SUMMARY

At one time or another everyone has thought about time travel. What would it be like to go back or ahead? Could you really change history, or make history? This is a story about an illustrator, Si Morley, who has the ability to go back in time based on a theory of Einstein. He becomes involved in a government project that allows him to go back to the winter of 1882 in New York City. It is a delightful story that includes a mystery, romance, and history. All ages will enjoy the characters and action.



QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT WHILE READING

VOCABULARY

It's important to make sure that your child has an understanding of key words in the book. Talking about words while reading is a great way for your child to learn new words.

In this book, you might talk about these words:

- regrettable (page 10)
- stereoscopic (page 19)
- gables, turrets (page 58)
- venture (page 68)
- financier (page 70)
- incomprehensible (page 388)
- scrupulously (page 387)
- debriefing (page 382)
- semi-stupor (page 292)
- boarder (page 165)
- transformation (page 165)

KEY IDEAS and THEMES

In addition to words, it's important to talk about key ideas and themes and how they develop over the course of the book. Here are some examples to get you started:

1. Many stories and movies have been made using time travel (remember *Back to the Future* and *Stargate*?) Finney introduces a different idea: the past, present, and future exist at the same time, and through self-hypnosis, a sensitive individual can move around in time. This theory is based on an idea of Albert Einstein's - refer to pages 51 and 52. Have you ever thought about time travel? Compare the different ideas – a portal, a vehicle through time, Finney's idea and others. What makes the most sense to you? Is anything believable?
2. All interesting stories include a problem that needs to be solved causing the action (plot) to take place. Because of the travel back and forth in time, this story has several

complications. Make a chart that identifies the main conflict, the other problems that evolve, and the characters to which they are related.

3. This novel is full of characters that are richly developed. Some belong to one time period, some to another time period, and some overlap. Create a [Venn diagram](#) that shows this. Then choose your favorite characters and do a character study.
 - a. What does the character look like?
 - b. How does the character act?
 - c. What kinds of things does the character say?
 - d. How do the other characters feel about him/her?
 - e. What motivates the character?
4. At first it seems that the government is just investigating the possibilities of time travel. Then later on in the novel, it seems that they want to alter events in the past to change the future (pages 385-389). What do you think of the ethics of this, assuming that it could be accomplished? Think of some examples where changing or stopping something minor might possibly have a more profound result. According to Si's actions, what does he believe? Do you agree with him?
5. In the end Si decides to return to the past to live. Why does he do that (page 398)? What would you have done?

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

1. Read some more time travel books; for example, H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine*. Compare ideas and discuss what theories make the most sense. Do you have any theories of your own?
2. Do some research regarding Albert Einstein. Why is he famous? What was his life like?
3. *Time and Again* is noted for its researched descriptions of life in New York City, especially the Dakota and the part of Central Park across from the Dakota building. (Look at pages 62 and 63) Because Si was an artist, drawings and photos are included in the story. See what you can find out about this section of NYC. Other important things have happened there. What were they? Create a timeline of important events. See if you can find some maps and pictures. If you can, go and visit this part of NYC.
4. The connection between the past and present is a very important theme in this novel. Jack Finney makes this interesting by including the culture, society, and manners of both time periods (1882 - 1970's). Because both of these times are in the past now, look up some information about what it was like to live then- clothing, entertainment, transportation, communication, occupations, beliefs-and more. How did people live? See if you can find some pictures and photos. Compare it to the 21st century. What is better now worse now?
5. Look up what some critics have said about this novel. See what others have said about what they like and/or dislike about this story. Write an opinion of your own and post it online in the appropriate place. What you write a letter to Jack Finney?