

Teacher: Woo Chak Shing

Book's title: Around the World in 80 Days

Author: Jules Verne

Publisher: Penguin Books

Sharing:

Around the World in 80 days, a classic adventure novel by Jules Verne which tells the story of Englishman Phileas Fogg and his assistant Jean Passepartout as they aim to travel around the globe in less than 80 days in order to win a bet that Fogg's upper-class friends have laid down.

On their journey, they have to utilize different types of transport ranging from trains and steamboats to elephants during their quest to traverse the late 19th century world. Meanwhile, Detective Fix is hunting for a suspect of a recent bank robbery whose description matches that of Fogg. Thus, while Fogg and Passepartout are going around the clock to circumnavigate the world, Detective Fix is on their tail trying to intercept their journey and bring them back to England for investigation.

This book explored our world at a time when travelling could still be considered an adventure and the connection between continents was very limited when compared to our modern world. While in today's world, it may take half a day on a plane to travel to the other side of the globe, in Fogg's time, it would have taken weeks to get there. Compared to Fogg's era, travelling to 'far away' places seemed more like a commute in our time. It shows us that with the advent of modern transportation, travelling has never been easier, safer and less time-consuming, but it has taken away some of the adventurous aspects of travelling. Perhaps going away on holiday has less impact in our time since it is much easier to get to your destination. Rather than planning your journey and taking weeks to get to your desired vacation spot, you can simply get on a plane and land within 24 hours. I think it lessened the impact of a get-away holiday and took out some of the charm and prestige of travelling. But we should still appreciate modern technology as it provides us with an efficient and safe mode of transport and be mindful of how technology rapidly advances in the modern era.

