

Study Guide for *The Time Borrower*

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The Time Borrower is a young adult novel that blends historical and science fiction. The study guide component provides teachers with differentiated questions and activities designed to develop thinking skills and promote a better understanding of this particular era in time. This study guide is reproducible for classroom use.

Chapters One — Five:

1. What is a liturgy?
2. What is Ryn's initial reaction to Linna's call? Would you have felt the same way?
3. Why is Linna so driven to get Ryn's help?
4. If you were Ryn, would you have shared your formulas? Explain your reasoning.
5. What obstacles does Ryn believe Linna will encounter? Explain.
6. Why do you suppose that Ryn doesn't want to tell his sister about incorporating vibrations into their formulas for time travel?

Chapters Six — Ten:

1. Linna equates the vibrations surrounding her body with a ceiling fan. Can you come up with other examples? List at least two.
2. What are Matins prayers?
3. What is a refractory?
4. What did Linna mean when she said, "There was more to fear in the little cottage than ghosts?"
5. What do you think the monks were carving in the wine cellar?
6. How did the monks communicate without speaking?

Chapters Eleven — Fifteen:

1. What is a Compline service?
2. Describe Brother Gregory's fear. Have you ever been that afraid? Explain.
3. How would you describe Linna's actions regarding food and sleep? Would you have taken the same chances? Why or why not?
4. What is the irony regarding Linna's footsteps in the snow?
5. If you were Ryn's sister, would you have told him about Linna's actions when she was in his room alone?
6. What is the formula for Snell's Law?

Chapters Sixteen — Twenty:

1. What do you think Linna found in that box?
2. How do you think Linna figured out the words “Later, after dark”?
3. See if you can write a paragraph or a short poem with an encrypted text.
4. Why does Linna think that the monk who saved her from the bees is the one she came back in time to help?
5. Have you ever been “thunderstruck?” Explain.

Chapters Twenty-one — Twenty-five:

1. What is a precentor? What role does he play in an abbey?
2. Yes or no. The young monk has mixed feelings about Linna.
3. What does Linna discover about the monastery?
4. Do you believe that Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* is indeed a “cursed” play? (You may want to do a bit of research before you answer.)
5. What do you think Linna sees in the wagon?

Chapters Twenty-six — Thirty:

1. Describe Brother Rulf.
2. How would you communicate with someone who didn’t speak your language?
3. Was your original prediction about the contents of the box correct?
4. What is a reliquary? Why were they so valued and why would anyone create forgeries?
5. Who do you suppose the other girl is?
6. How does Linna know that the reliquary is a fake? Explain your reasoning.

Chapters Thirty-one — Thirty-five:

1. If you were Linna, would you have gone back up the hill to the abbey or followed the girl? Explain.
2. What are *conversi* monks?
3. Why is Brother Gregory conflicted?
4. Even if you don’t understand Latin, using what you do know about the English language, try to translate the sentence “*De monasterio exire! Non es securus.*”
5. Yes or no. Linna still cares about Ryn. Support your answer.
6. Why did Brother Rulf chase Linna down the hill?

Chapters Thirty-six— Forty:

1. What was the scribe's reaction to Linna's warning?
2. What is a triumvirate?
3. What are Kabbalistic prayers?
4. What would you do if you received Charlotte Campbell's message? What do you think Ryn will do?
5. What did Brother Gregory mean when he said that the girl "*had more to fear than just bees?*"
6. List at least four different types of monks that were prevalent during the Middle Ages.
7. Yes or no. Ryn has a viable plan to get Linna back to the 21st century. If you answered no, what plan would you create?

Chapters Forty-one— Forty-five:

1. Do you think "the end justifies the means" regarding the actions that Brothers Alban and Trewyn took to fund the monastery? Can you think of examples in history where deceit was used to obtain a greater good. Do you agree?
2. Brother Gregory does not tell anyone about his gruesome discovery in the forge. Do you agree with his actions? Why or why not?
3. Who is "Monty Python?" Can you name any of their movies? (Give yourself a star if you've seen any of these movies!)
4. What is the consequence for adding vibrations to Snell's Law?
5. Why do you suppose it took Brother Gregory so long to figure out that Linna was in the cellar under the forge?
6. Who wrote *Canterbury Tales*? *Add it to your reading list before you graduate from high school!
7. Who do the monks think Ryn is? Why?

Chapters Forty-six— Fifty:

1. Do you think the monk will return to the cellar to save Linna? Explain.
2. What became of Brother Alban?
3. Why do you think the dark-eyed girl helped Ryn? Or, do you think she was setting a trap? Explain.

Chapters Fifty-one — Fifty-five:

1. What do you think the abbot intends to do with “King Edward’s man?”
2. Think of three words (or more) that would describe how Linna felt about the monk who rescued her.
3. Re-write any three sentences from the dialogue into the modern English that we speak today.
4. Why do you suppose the scribe went back for more of the poisoned potion? Couldn’t he have just killed Linna?
5. Charlotte Campbell cancelled her date because she was so mesmerized by what she was translating. Have you ever done something that was so fascinating that you cancelled dates and appointments, too? Explain.

Chapters Fifty-six — Sixty:

1. What would you do if you were in Ryn’s predicament in the bell tower?
2. The scribe has a conscience. Yes or no.
3. How does the dark-eyed girl’s conscience plague her?
4. Find Edinburgh and Dunbar on a map of Scotland.
5. Is Ryn brave or reckless? Explain.

Chapters Sixty-one — Sixty-five:

1. Why do you suppose Brother Gregory did not recognize who his attacker was?
2. What’s a belfry?
3. How does Ryn figure out how to get down from the tower?
4. What kind of man is Brother Rulf? Justify your answer with examples from the text.
5. If you could give Linna advice, what would you tell her?

Chapters Sixty-six — Seventy:

1. Was the dark-eyed girl the intended victim for the man who tripped her? Explain.
2. Ryn talks about an “automatic zone.” Can you explain what he means? Has this ever happened to you?
3. What spiritual “battle” is Brother Gregory facing?
4. What ultimately saved Ryn from his death?

Chapters Seventy-one — Seventy-five:

1. What is an Angelus Bell?
2. Who was Ryn really chasing?
3. Why does Linna mistake Ryn for someone else?

Chapters Seventy-six — Eighty:

1. Yes or no. Ryn is really “over” Linna. Have you ever felt that way about someone?
2. Why does the abbot feel guilty? Explain.
3. Ryn, who is thought to be the “King’s man,” witnesses two gruesome scenes in the forge. If you were Ryn, what would you have done?
4. Ryn compares the King’s men to cockroaches and ants. What other comparisons can you make?

Chapters Eighty-one — Eighty-five:

1. What is a ruse? What was the ruse that Brother Rulf perpetuated?
2. Why do you think Linna was brought back in time?
3. Ryn says that, “It’s never a good idea to break up a fight.” Do you agree or disagree? Explain.
4. Do you think it was “the kiss” that made Linna realize how she felt about Ryn, or was she hiding her feelings all along? Use examples from the text to support your reasoning.
5. Do you think the abbot can stop the conversi from committing the deed they had planned?

Chapters Eighty-six — Ninety:

1. Do you agree with Ryn’s philosophy Don’t Fight If You Can’t Win? Explain.
2. Who is Margaretae?
3. What truth does Linna uncover about her actions?
4. Who is Brother Rulf’s actual brother?
5. Who is Mary Shelley? Do you know who her husband was? Better yet, have you read any of his poetry? (Give yourself a double star if you answered yes to these questions. If not, it’s a good time to find a search engine!)

Chapters Ninety-one — Ninety-five:

1. Why doesn't the abbot want to continue having two distinct "orders" in the abbey? Explain.
2. What do you think the green-eyed monk and Margaretae will do next?
3. Explain the matter of "entry" when it comes to the time-space continuum.
4. Where did you expect Ryn and Linna to wind up in time?
5. Should Ryn tell his sister, Aeden, the truth? If you were Aeden, how would you react?

Bonus Question: Who was the "time borrower?" Explain your reasoning.

Theoretical Questions

1. How is a monastery like a beehive? Give at least three examples.
2. Can you think of another simile for the monastery?
3. Find examples of figurative language in this novel (i.e., metaphor, simile, allusion, alliteration, onomatopoeia, hyperbole, personification, cliché).
4. Do you think an organization like the Monastery at Lothian can survive with two separate orders or tiers? Can you give examples of organizations where this is practiced?

Thematic Projects

1. Make a scale drawing of a 13th-century monastery in Scotland or England.
2. Construct a three-dimensional 13th-century blast furnace. (Visual version only!)
3. Find images of reliquaries via a computer search.
4. Draw a hierarchy of monks and their duties. (It will differ according to their order and monastery.)
5. Research Edward I and John Balliol.
6. Compare the Scottish Wars of Independence with the American War of Independence (Revolutionary War).