

## Olentangy Local School District Literature Selection Review

Teacher: Nathan Bachman

School: OLMS

Book Title: The Island of Dr. Moreau

Genre: Science Fiction

Author: H.G. Wells

Pages: 140

Publisher: Bantam Dell

Copyright: 1896

*In a brief rationale, please provide the following information relative to the book you would like added to the school's book collection for classroom use. You may attach additional pages as needed.*

**Book Summary and Summary Citation:** (suggested resources include book flap summaries, review summaries from publisher, book vendors, etc.)

Ranked among the classic novels of the English language and the inspiration for several unforgettable movies, this early work of H. G. Wells was greeted in 1896 by howls of protest from reviewers, who found it horrifying and blasphemous. They wanted to know more about the wondrous possibilities of science shown in his first book, *The Time Machine*, not its potential for misuse and terror. In *The Island of Dr. Moreau* a shipwrecked gentleman named Edward Prendick, stranded on a Pacific island lorded over by the notorious Dr. Moreau, confronts dark secrets, strange creatures, and a reason to run for his life.

While this riveting tale was intended to be a commentary on evolution, divine creation, and the tension between human nature and culture, modern readers familiar with genetic engineering will marvel at Wells's prediction of the ethical issues raised by producing "smarter" human beings or bringing back extinct species. These levels of interpretation add a richness to Prendick's adventures on Dr. Moreau's island of lost souls without distracting from what is still a rip-roaring good read.

**Provide an instructional rationale for the use of this title, including specific reference to the OLSD curriculum blueprints and/or State standards.**

The Island of Dr. Moreau serves as a challenging, stretch text for middle school students. It is a English classic that fulfils many literature standards.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.1](#)

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.2](#)

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.3](#)

Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

**Include two professional review of this title:** (a suggested list of resources for identifying professional reviews is shown below. Reviews may be “cut and pasted” (with citation) into the form or printed reviews may be attached to the form). Reviews should suggest an appropriate grade-level or grade-band.

Review #1

Publisher’s Weekly:

Voice actor Griffin brings the perfect sense of earnestness to his reading of this prophetic tale of science gone mad. Edward Prendick, an upper-class Englishman, is shipwrecked, adrift on the ocean and facing certain death, when he is miraculously rescued by a passing ship. His relief is short-lived, however, as he soon finds himself marooned on a strange and dangerous island ruled by a mysterious scientist named Dr. Moreau. The only other inhabitants of the island are Moreau’s assistant, Montgomery, and a disturbing collection of beast folk—animal hybrids stitched and spliced together by Moreau through a series of cruel and painful experiments in his attempts to elevate common animals into some twisted semblance of humankind. Trapped on this bizarre island-sized laboratory, Prendick must survive while under the ever-watchful eyes of his human benefactor and the unpredictable eyes of his animalistic creations. Griffin’s reading brings a level of hopeful desperation to Prendick, the story’s narrator. His Prendick is a man damaged by having seen horrendous things he can never fully explain—or forget—and yet he’s determined to tell his story one last, definitive time. It is a solid, compelling and thought-provoking reading of this timeless tale of science fiction. (*Apr.*)

Review #2

Learner Books:

When Edward Prendick is shipwrecked on a mysterious island in the South Pacific, he meets the infamous Dr. Moreau, a physiologist who was forced to leave England because of his repulsive experiments on animals. On the island, screams echo from the laboratory in the middle of the night, and strange beasts prowl the jungle. Prendick discovers that the doctor is still performing horrific experiments, trying to turn animals into human beings. Terrified, Prendick wants to escape but soon finds himself seeking justice for the half-human subjects of Dr. Moreau’s experiments. These experiences force Prendick to consider the relationship between science and ethics. First published in 1896, this is an unabridged version of English author H. G. Wells’s iconic science fiction novel.

**What alternate text(s) could also fulfill the instructional requirements?**

Title: The Time Machine

Author: H. G. Wells.

Title: Challenger Deep

Author: Neil Shusterman

Title:

Author:

**Document any potentially controversial content:**

The novel deals with animal cruelty and shipwrecks.

**Keeping in mind the age, academic level, and maturity of the intended reader, what is the suggested classroom use: (check all that apply)**

Gifted/Accelerated                       Regular                       At Risk

**GRADE LEVEL(S):** 6     7     8     9     10     11     12

**Reading Level of this Title (if applicable):**

**Suggested Professional Literacy Review Sources:**

School Library Journal

Horn Book

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates)

Library Journal

Book Links

Publisher's Weekly

Booklist

Kirkus Review

Wilson Library Catalog

English Journal (and other resources of the National Council of Teachers of English)

The Reading Teacher (International Reading Association)

Literature for Today's Young Adults

**Signatures:**

**Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Department Head:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Building Administrator:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Curriculum Supervisor:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_