

Answer key > A Sense of Wonder: An Introduction to Science Fiction

by Thomas Pool ● 2020

1. What is the central idea of the text? RI.9-10.2 ∨
 - A. Science fiction can lead to technological advancements in the real world.
 - B. Science fiction is often a reaction to what is happening in society and the world.**
 - C. Mary Shelley was the first science fiction writer, even though that was not her intention.
 - D. Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein" is her idea about what was possible at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution.
2. What does the word "abominable" mean as it is used in the text? (Paragraph 2) RI.9-10.4 ∨
 - A. pleasant to get along with
 - B. able to understand
 - C. revolting to look at**
 - D. easy to talk to
3. How does paragraph 14 contribute to the development of ideas in the article? RI.9-10.5 ∨
 - A. It develops the idea that sci-fi has a diverse and wide appeal.**
 - B. It develops the idea that sci-fi is a genre that has a lot of literary prizes.
 - C. It develops the idea that sci-fi books are often made into Hollywood movies.
 - D. It develops the idea that sci-fi mainly appeals to groups who have a special interest in it.
4. What connection does the author draw between "Godzilla" and today's superhero movies? RI.9-10.3 ∨
 - A. Today's superhero movies imagine the character of Godzilla in a fictional world, fighting an outside force.
 - B. They all explore the idea of an uncontrollable force that could end the world at any time.**
 - C. They all have multiple remakes with each new generation of movie-goers.
 - D. Today's superhero movies are remakes of "Godzilla."

5. How does the author develop his central idea over the course of the text? RI.9-10.2 ∨

Student answers will vary. The author introduces the text with an anecdote about Mary Shelley writing the first science fiction story, defines science fiction, explains how the genre has changed with society, and emphasizes its continuing relevance today and in the future. The author states that the summer of 1816 was an unusual one and that "Frankenstein; or The Modern Prometheus," was written by Mary Shelley "during that cold, dark summer" (Paragraph 2) and is considered the first work of science fiction. The author goes on to define science fiction as helping "us make sense of the mysteries of our world by exploring the mysteries of worlds we create." He also adds that it helps us "find the answers to our problems in the stars of distant galaxies, in the minds of machines brought to life, and in the strength of the heroes who rise above adversity and save their worlds" (Paragraph 4). As society and the world change, so do the anxiety-driven questions people have about those changes. "We see how science fiction resurges with every great technological leap, from the industrial revolution, to the fear of nuclear annihilation after the Second World War, the hope of the first Moon landing, and the dawn of the Information Age" (Paragraph 5). The author then states that as the world continues to change, new "television shows like the Netflix series Black Mirror explore the new anxieties developing around the rapidly changing technology that dominates every aspect of our daily lives" (Paragraph 11). Science fiction is a genre that continues to change and grow because it "is a genre for everyone. It is a dynamic genre with a wide array of themes that is being propelled forward today by many new and exciting authors from many different backgrounds" (Paragraph 14). Finally, the author concludes with a prediction for the future of the genre: "as many nations and private corporations start to invest in the idea of colonizing Mars and the Moon, the genre can give us new ways to imagine the consequences in the years to come" (Paragraph 15).