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Around the World in Eighty Days

Jules Verne · *1873* · *George Makepeace Towle translation*

Phileas Fogg, a punctual gentleman of the Reform Club, wagers that he can go around the world in eighty days. He takes Passepartout, is hunted by the detective Fix, and saves Aouda. Coolness, loyalty, and a day gained by the eastward journey decide the bet—and something more than a bet.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

If "the unforeseen does not exist" for a man of the clock, what can still surprise him, and what is the journey worth when the money is almost gone?

"The unforeseen does not exist"

Phileas Fogg · At the Reform Club, when he takes the wager

Fogg treats time as a minimum to be used exactly, and he is nearly ruined by arrests, a missed steamer, and a Sioux attack. The unforeseen does exist, but he meets it without losing his head. He spends a fortune to be punctual, saves Aouda, and only learns at the end that he has gained a day by traveling east. He wins the twenty thousand pounds, and the last page asks what he has really gained: "nothing but a charming woman, who... made him the happiest of men."

KEY CHARACTERS

Phileas Fogg
A reserved English gentleman whose exactitude looks like coldness and proves to be courage, generosity, and self-command.

Jean Passepartout
His French servant, warm, fallible, and loyal; he wants a quiet house and gets the world.

Detective Fix
A policeman who takes Fogg for a thief and pursues him around the world; not a villain, but wrong.

Aouda
An Indian widow rescued from death, who travels with them and at last becomes Fogg's wife.

the Reform Club members
Stuart, Sullivan, and the rest, who take the bet and wait in London.

A WELL-USED MINIMUM

> *"The unforeseen does not exist"*
>
> **Phileas Fogg** · The Reform Club

> *"That we might have made the tour of the world in only seventy-eight days."*
>
> **Passepartout** · The morning after the wedding, when he has just found out the last twist of the timetable

Grades 6–8

Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01

The Wager

CHAPTERS I–V

Passepartout enters a house of clocks. At the Reform Club, a newspaper's timetable becomes a twenty-thousand-pound bet, and Fogg leaves that very night.

- Fogg is exact in his habits to the point of comedy; the joke will be tested in earnest.
- The others at the club think accidental delay will beat him.
- Passepartout has sought a tranquil life and gets a race around the world.

> *"The unforeseen does not exist"*
>
> **Phileas Fogg** · Chapter IV, answering the club's warnings

02

Suez, India, and Aouda

CHAPTERS VI–XV

Fix, a detective, takes Fogg for a Bank of England thief and follows. In India a railway gap, an elephant, and a rescue at a suttee bind Aouda to their party.

- Passepartout, looking at Bombay, finds that it is "by no means useless to travel, if a man wants to see something new."
- Fogg will spend money without a flicker if it buys hours.
- The rescue of Aouda is a risk that is not in the timetable, and he takes it.

> *"I see that it is by no means useless to travel, if a man wants to see something new."*
>
> **Passepartout** · After going ashore at Aden or Bombay, on returning to the steamer

03

Hong Kong and a Long Nose

CHAPTERS XVI–XXIII

Fix nearly separates servant from master with drink and a missed ship. Passepartout is carried off; Fogg charters another vessel and goes on, still calm.

- Fix believes he is serving justice; he nearly ruins an innocent man's wager.
- Passepartout's loyalty is comic and real; he suffers for his master.
- Aouda's presence changes the party from a bet into a small household on the move.

04

The Pacific and the Railroad

CHAPTERS XXIV–XXIX

They cross to San Francisco and take the Pacific Railroad. A buffalo herd, a failing bridge, and an attack delay them; Fogg does his duty in a fight and a chase.

- America is not smoother than India; the timetable still has to be fought for.
- Fogg's courage is as quiet as his punctuality.
- Fix is still in the party, a false friend with a warrant in mind.

05

London, and a Day Gained

CHAPTERS XXX–XXXVII

They reach Liverpool, Fogg is arrested, released, and arrives in London apparently five minutes late. The next day the truth of the date-line appears; he wins, and he marries Aouda.

- He had gone east and gained a day without noticing, because his watch kept London time but not the names of the days.
- He divides what is left of the money and deducts the gas Passepartout left burning, "for the sake of regularity."
- Asked what he has gained by the trouble, the book answers with Aouda, not with the wager alone.

> *"Phileas Fogg had won his wager, and had made his journey around the world in eighty days."*
>
> The closing chapter, after the date is understood

Self-Command · Loyalty · Courage · Time and Providence · A Greater Gain

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 6–8

1. The hosted text is George Makepeace Towle's translation (Project Gutenberg #103; the catalogue also shortens the name as George M. Towle).
2. Fogg's claim is "The unforeseen does not exist." The plot tests the claim and then honors his calm without agreeing that nothing unforeseen happens.
3. They travel east; the gained day is the book's famous device. Fogg's watch "had always kept London time" and would have betrayed the fact "if it had marked the days as well as the hours."
4. Passepartout's travel remark is: "I see that it is by no means useless to travel, if a man wants to see something new."
5. The suttee episode and Fix's colonial policing belong to Verne's nineteenth-century picture of the world. Read them as the plot uses them, and note the period.

Quotations are verbatim from the George Makepeace Towle translation, Project Gutenberg #103, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/around-the-world-in-eighty-days/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.