

TIME VILLAINS

DISCUSSION GUIDE



ABOUT THE BOOK

Story Thieves meets *Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library* in this wacky, funny, and fast-paced middle grade series starter with the perfect combination of magic, imagination, and adventure.

Javi Santiago is trying his best not to fail sixth grade. So, when the annual “invite any three people to dinner” homework assignment rolls around, Javi enlists his best friend, Wiki, and his sister, Brady, to help him knock it out of the park.

But the dinner party is a lot more than they bargained for. The family’s mysterious antique table actually brings the historical guests to the meal...and Blackbeard the Pirate is turning out to be the worst guest of all time.

Before they can say “avast, ye maties,” Blackbeard escapes, determined to summon his bloodthirsty pirate crew. And as Javi, Wiki, and Brady try to figure out how to get Blackbeard back to his own time, they might have to invite some even zanier figures to set things right again...



Photo © Sydney Torner

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

VICTOR PIÑEIRO heads up content and social media at an ad agency where he’s run @YouTube, some of @Google and launched @Skittles, creating its award-winning zany voice. He’s also designed games and toys for Hasbro, written/produced a popular documentary on virtual worlds and taught third graders. *Time Villains* is his first novel. Visit him at victorpineiro.com/author.

PRAISE FOR *TIME VILLAINS*

★ “Piñeiro scores with this tale of friendship, magic, and adventure... Magnificent.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*, STARRED review

“Great for fans of *Mr. Lemoncello's Library*, debut author Piñeiro’s writing offers plenty of humor, as well as clever historical and literary Easter eggs for readers to puzzle out.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

“You won’t be able to put down this action-packed, relentlessly funny adventure.”

—Sarah Mlynowski, author of the *New York Times* bestselling *Whatever After* series

“A magical table that pulls in famous people from history and fiction?
Is this the greatest idea for a book ever? Yes. Yes it is.”

—James Riley, *New York Times* bestselling author of the *Story Thieves* series



TIME VILLAINS

DISCUSSION GUIDE



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you could invite any three people to dinner (from history or fiction), who would you invite? Why?
2. Who would be the most dangerous person from history or fiction you could invite to dinner?
3. If anyone from history or fiction could be your teacher, who would you choose?
4. What character from Wiki's Pedia did you find the most interesting? Why? Can you find out any other interesting information about that character?
5. What are some clues that Aunt Nancy or one of the teachers might have secret identities?
6. Javi doesn't think that being a good cook is something to be proud of for most of the book. Are you good at something that's out of the ordinary?
7. Javi's on a mission to have everyone in the world try tostones and mofongo. What food do you wish more people knew about or loved?
8. Wiki thinks that the parrandas Puerto Ricans have are pretty wild. What traditions does your family or culture have that would surprise others?
9. What unique talents do Javi, Brady, and Wiki have that allow them to save the day? Refer to a specific example about each character.
10. What did you learn about history or literature from a character in the book?
11. If you could be a character from literature or history, who would you be?
12. What details did the author use to keep the scenes with the pirates funny rather than frightening?
13. How does Javi change his perception of himself over the course of the book? What triggers this change?
14. Would you want to attend Finistere? Why or why not?



TIME VILLAINS

DISCUSSION GUIDE



WIKI'S PEDIA

Extra intel on visitors in the book from Wiki's notebooks

BLACKBEARD

The most notorious pirate ever, Edward Teach commanded a crew of hundreds as he wreaked havoc around the West Indies and along the coast of Britain's North American colonies. In 1717, he converted a captured French vessel into *Queen Anne's Revenge*, his legendary forty-gun warship. From there he terrorized what would later become the United States, capturing ships, stealing cargo, and blockading ports. Blackbeard rejected the use of violence but was a master at intimidation, wrapping slow-burning lighted coils in his hair and beard to make his face look like it was on fire. As epic as his reputation became, his reign as a dreadful pirate only lasted a couple of years. He was violently killed in 1718 by Robert Maynard, who mounted his head on the bowsprit of his ship to tell the world that Blackbeard had been defeated.

ANANSI (AUNT NANCY)

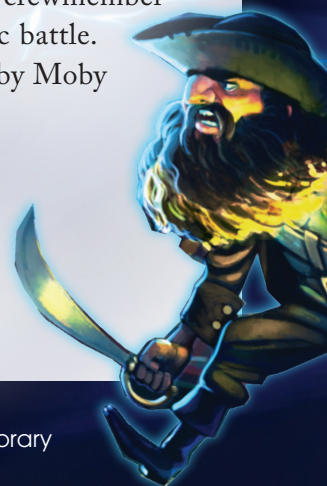
Anansi the spider is one of the most important characters in African, African American, and Caribbean folklore. Anansi is a trickster who uses cleverness or secret knowledge to fool people into doing what she wants. Often it's important things like creating the sun, moon, stars, and planets; gifting humans all the stories in the world; or bringing writing, agriculture, and hunting to Earth. Stories of Anansi began in western Africa, but the slave trade brought those stories to the Caribbean and the United States. In the US, Anansi's name changed to Aunt Nancy. (So she has the same name as my aunt. It's just a coincidence. Let's not be ridiculous.)

CAPTAIN AHAB

The fanatical captain of the whaling ship *Pequod*, Ahab dedicates his life to finding and destroying Moby Dick, the white whale that bit off his leg. On his final mission he hires a crew by fooling them into thinking they're going on a typical whaling expedition. Once at sea, he reveals his true purpose, forcing them to join his quest for revenge and offering a golden doubloon to whoever spots Moby Dick. When a crewmember finally sees the white whale, they go on a disastrous three-day chase that ends with a tragic battle. Ahab gets tangled up in his harpoon line, falls overboard, and gets dragged into the depths by Moby Dick, drowning. His story is told in Herman Melville's novel *Moby Dick*.

FRIDA KAHLO

Born Magdalena Carmen Frida Kahlo y Calderón, Mexican painter Frida Kahlo became one of the most famous artists of the past century and a feminist icon whose popularity



TIME VILLAINS

DISCUSSION GUIDE



keeps growing. Kahlo got polio when she was six, which damaged her right leg and gave her a limp. When she was eighteen, Kahlo suffered a horrible bus accident that caused her chronic pain and medical problems for the rest of her life. Despite all of these setbacks, Kahlo became a beloved artist best known for her colorful, imaginative self-portraits that were inspired by her emotional and physical struggles.

DOROTHY GALE

Dorothy Gale is the main character of L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and many other Oz books. She lives on a farm with her uncle and aunt when a tornado sweeps their house to the magical land of Oz. Just about everyone's read *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* or seen the movie *The Wizard of Oz*, but L. Frank Baum wrote thirteen more Oz books, and other authors wrote dozens more, so Dorothy has far more adventures than taking on the Wicked Witch of the West. Dorothy eventually moves to Oz permanently, living in an apartment in Queen Ozma's palace.

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

The main character of Robert Louis Stevenson's book *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Dr. Henry Jekyll is a respected doctor in England who creates a potion to hide his bad side. Instead it turns him into Edward Hyde, a hideous, murderous monster. Jekyll tries controlling his alter ego, and for a while he has the upper hand, but eventually Hyde takes over, and it leads to their deaths.

DON QUIXOTE

Alonso Quixano was a noble living in La Mancha, Spain, who read so many books about knights that he lost his mind and decided to become Don Quixote, the greatest knight ever. He dusted off an old suit of armor, pretended his old horse was the great steed Rocinante, and convinced the peasant Sancho Panza to be his squire. The two spent their days fighting windmills they thought were giants and attacking sheep herds they thought were armies. His adventures are told in the book *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes, which is considered by many to be the greatest novel ever written.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

A musical genius and one of the greatest composers ever, Mozart began composing music at the age of five and performing it for royalty all over Europe. Over the next thirty years, he composed more than six hundred operas, symphonies, sonatas, concertos, and choral pieces, many of which are considered to be the best of all time. People still play his music everywhere and anywhere. He's a huge influence on the music we hear today.



TIME VILLAINS

DISCUSSION GUIDE



ROSA PARKS

Known as the mother of the modern-day civil rights movement in America, Rosa Parks was a lifelong activist who taught the country that Black people should be treated equally and changed the course of history. In 1955, when Black people were still segregated (meaning they had to attend different schools, use different public restrooms, and eat in different restaurants among other things), Rosa Parks got on a bus and refused to give up her seat for a white man. The driver called the police, Rosa Parks was arrested, and it sparked a huge protest that ended when the Supreme Court ended racial segregation on public transportation. It was an important win that helped end segregation altogether.

CLEOPATRA

Cleopatra ruled ancient Egypt for almost three decades and is one of the most famous women who ever lived. At eighteen, she and her ten-year-old brother inherited the kingdom of Egypt, but she made enemies among the courtiers, and they ended her reign, exiling her. She crossed paths with Julius Caesar, they fell in love, and he made her queen of Egypt again. When he was assassinated in Rome a few years later, his military commander Mark Antony fell in love with Cleopatra. They married, had three children, and combined their armies to take on a Roman enemy. Cleopatra spoke three languages, was well-read, was quite adept at scientific advances, and was a great conversationalist to boot. She was also a brilliant politician, who brought prosperity and peace to a country that was in really bad shape when she inherited it.

HATTORI HANZŌ

Hanzō was a legendary sixteenth-century samurai, fighting in many historic battles and helping the leader of his clan become the ruler of Japan. He was known not only for his battle prowess, but also for his political and strategic brilliance. He commanded a unit of over two hundred samurai.

ANTAR

Also known as Antarah ibn Shaddad, Antar lived in ancient Arabia and was equally famous for being a mighty warrior and a brilliant poet. The Black outcast son of an Arab father and an Ethiopian enslaved mother, Antar struggled to win over his father and his tribe, but gained great respect through his courage on the battlefield and mastery of poetry. His greatest poem forms part of the *Mu'allaqāt*, one of the most important Arabic books of all time.

