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## **"Battle for the Park" Lesson Plan Guide**

*by H.D. Hunter*

### **Unit Overview**

**Duration:** 3-4 weeks

**Grade Level:** 3-5

**Subject Integration:** ELA, Science, Technology, Social Studies

**Essential Question:** How can we balance our dependence on technology with the need for human connection and critical thinking?

### **Learning Objectives**

**Students will be able to:**

- Analyze science fiction elements and their relationship to current technology
- Examine themes of community, belonging, and technological dependence
- Understand character development through internal and external conflicts
- Make connections between fictional technology and real-world AI development
- Explore ethical questions about artificial intelligence and automation
- Demonstrate understanding through collaborative problem-solving and creative projects
- Develop critical thinking skills about technology's role in society

### **Standards Alignment**

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3:** Compare and contrast characters, settings, or events, drawing on specific details
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.2:** Determine theme from details in the text and summarize
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.6:** Describe how point of view influences story events
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.1:** Write opinion pieces supporting a point of view with reasons and information
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1:** Engage effectively in collaborative discussions

### **WEEK 1: Welcome to 2048**

#### **Day 1: Future World Building and Science Fiction Introduction**

**Objective:** Introduce science fiction genre and futuristic setting

**Materials:** Timeline template, images of current theme parks, world map

#### **Opening (10 minutes)**

- Quick-write: "What do you think the world will be like in 2048?"
- Share predictions with partners



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### **Main Activity (30 minutes)**

1. **Science Fiction Genre Exploration** (15 minutes)
  - Define science fiction and its characteristics
  - Discuss how sci-fi often explores current issues through future scenarios
  - Introduction to Futureland concept: floating theme park
2. **Setting Analysis Preparation** (15 minutes)
  - Create timeline from 2024 to 2048—what changes might occur?
  - Examine current theme park technology
  - Predict: What would a "traveling" theme park need to function?

### **Closing (5 minutes)**

- Share one prediction about future entertainment technology
- Assign reading: Opening chapters introducing Cameron and Futureland

**Assessment:** Timeline creativity, understanding of science fiction genre

### **Day 2: Meeting Cameron and Understanding His World**

**Objective:** Analyze protagonist's unique situation and environment

**Materials:** Character analysis worksheet, Venn diagram template

### **Opening (10 minutes)**

- Partner discussion: "What would be amazing about living in Futureland? What would be challenging?"

### **Main Activity (30 minutes)**

1. **Character Foundation** (20 minutes)
  - Character analysis chart for Cameron
  - Focus on: What makes his life unique? What does he want? What are his challenges?
  - Compare Cameron's life to typical middle school experience
2. **Setting Impact Analysis** (10 minutes)
  - How does growing up in Futureland shape Cameron's personality?
  - Predict how attending regular school might change him
  - Introduction to the 'revs'—what do they do in Futureland?

### **Closing (5 minutes)**

- Exit ticket: "What would you most want to ask Cameron about his life?"

**Homework:** Read chapters about Cameron starting school

**Assessment:** Character analysis accuracy, understanding of setting's influence



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### **Day 3: New School, New Friends**

**Objective:** Explore themes of belonging and community

**Materials:** Community comparison chart, friendship analysis worksheet

#### **Opening (5 minutes)**

- Quick poll: "What's harder—being the new kid at school or living somewhere completely different from everyone else?"

#### **Main Activity (35 minutes)**

1. **Community Analysis (20 minutes)**
  - Compare Futureland community vs. Atlanta middle school community
  - Identify what Cameron gains and loses in each environment
  - Discuss: What makes someone feel like they belong?
2. **Friendship Development Tracking (15 minutes)**
  - Begin tracking Cameron's new friendships
  - Analyze what draws the friends together
  - Predict how these friendships will be important to the story

#### **Closing (5 minutes)**

- Gallery walk of community comparison charts
- Preview next reading assignment

**Assessment:** Community analysis depth, friendship prediction quality

### **Days 4-5: Technology Troubles Begin**

**Objective:** Track the development of the central mystery

**Materials:** Mystery tracking sheet, technology analysis chart

#### **Structure for Each Day:**

- **Opening (10 min):** Mystery journal—students record strange events and theories
- **Main Activity (25 min):** Literature circles focusing on clues and character reactions
- **Closing (10 min):** Theory sharing and evidence discussion

**Reading Assignments:** Chapters introducing 'rev' malfunctions and Cameron's growing suspicions  
**Assessment:** Mystery tracking accuracy, evidence-based reasoning

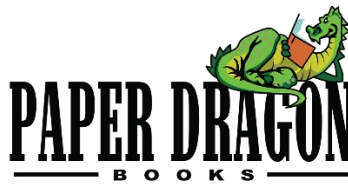
### **WEEK 2: Deepening Mystery and Technology Themes**

#### **Day 6: When Technology Goes Wrong**

**Objective:** Analyze the role and dangers of AI dependence

**Materials:** AI comparison chart, malfunction tracking sheet

#### **Opening (10 minutes)**



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- Brainstorm: "What technology do we depend on every day? What would happen if it stopped working?"

### **Main Activity (30 minutes)**

1. **AI Analysis** (20 minutes)
  - Compare the 'revs' to current AI technology
  - Track what goes wrong with the 'revs' and potential causes
  - Discuss: How dependent are the people in Futureland on the 'revs'?
2. **Real-World Connections** (10 minutes)
  - Identify current examples of AI in daily life
  - Discuss benefits and potential risks of AI dependence
  - Connect to themes in the story

### **Closing (5 minutes)**

- Quick-write: "What's one way we should be careful about AI technology?"

**Assessment:** AI analysis understanding, real-world connections quality

## **Day 7: Trust and Suspicion**

**Objective:** Examine character development and family dynamics

**Materials:** Trust analysis worksheet, character change tracking

### **Opening (5 minutes)**

- Think-pair-share: "How do you think Cameron feels about suspecting his parents?"

### **Main Activity (35 minutes)**

1. **Character Development Analysis** (25 minutes)
  - Track how Cameron changes as he notices problems
  - Analyze the conflict between trusting family and trusting instincts
  - Discuss: When should young people speak up about concerns?
2. **Relationship Dynamics** (10 minutes)
  - Examine how suspicion affects Cameron's relationship with his parents
  - Explore how his friendships provide support during difficult times
  - Connect to real-world situations of trusting instincts

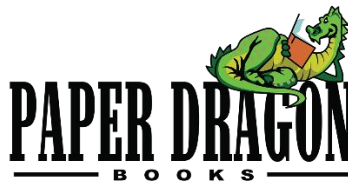
### **Closing (5 minutes)**

- Exit ticket: "What makes Cameron brave enough to investigate?"

**Assessment:** Character development tracking, understanding of internal conflict

## **Day 8: Friends and Teamwork**

**Objective:** Analyze collaboration and problem-solving themes



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**Materials:** Teamwork analysis chart, problem-solving strategy sheet

**Opening (10 minutes)**

- Discuss: "What can a team accomplish that individuals cannot?"

**Main Activity (30 minutes)**

1. **Teamwork Analysis** (20 minutes)
  - Identify each friend's unique contribution to solving the mystery
  - Analyze how different perspectives help piece together the puzzle
  - Track specific examples of successful collaboration
2. **Problem-Solving Strategies** (10 minutes)
  - Identify strategies the friends use: observation, research, testing theories
  - Connect to real-world problem-solving approaches
  - Discuss importance of diverse viewpoints

**Closing (5 minutes)**

- Share one strength each friend brings to the team

**Homework:** Continue reading, track teamwork examples

**Assessment:** Teamwork analysis depth, strategy identification

**Days 9-10: Rising Action and Investigation**

**Objective:** Track mystery development and character growth

**Follow similar structure with focus on:**

- How the friends gather and analyze evidence
- Character growth through facing challenges
- Building tension toward climax
- Technology vs. human ingenuity themes

**WEEK 3: Climax and Resolution**

**Day 11: Crisis and Revelation**

**Objective:** Analyze climax and mystery resolution

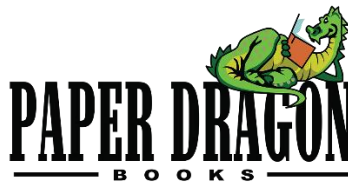
**Materials:** Plot analysis worksheet, cause-and-effect chart

**Opening (10 minutes)**

- Complete reading of climax chapters
- Initial reactions to revelations

**Main Activity (30 minutes)**

1. **Mystery Resolution Analysis** (20 minutes)
  - Trace how clues led to the solution



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- Analyze what caused the 'rev' malfunctions
- Discuss: Could this have been prevented? How?

**2. Character Transformation (10 minutes)**

- Compare Cameron at beginning vs. end of story
- Identify key moments that changed him
- Discuss how facing the crisis affected all characters

**Closing (5 minutes)**

- Quick-write: "What did Cameron learn that will help him in the future?"

**Assessment:** Plot analysis accuracy, character transformation understanding

**Day 12: Themes and Real-World Applications**

**Objective:** Synthesize themes and connect to current issues

**Materials:** Theme analysis worksheet, current events articles about AI

**Opening (10 minutes)**

- Small group discussion: "What are the main messages of this story?"

**Main Activity (30 minutes)**

**1. Theme Synthesis (20 minutes)**

- Identify major themes with textual evidence
- Focus on: technology dependence, community, friendship, growing up
- Connect themes to real-world situations

**2. Current Events Connection (10 minutes)**

- Examine current news about AI development
- Discuss: What lessons from the story apply to real AI development?
- Explore how young people can stay informed about technology issues

**Closing (5 minutes)**

- Share one way the story changed their thinking about technology

**Assessment:** Theme identification with evidence, real-world applications

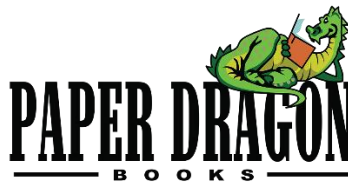
**Day 13: Future Technology Project Introduction**

**Objective:** Apply story themes to creative and analytical thinking

**Materials:** Project guidelines, research resources

**Project Options:**

1. **Design Better AI:** Create plans for AI that avoid the problems in the story
2. **Future Community Planning:** Design a community that balances technology with human connection



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3. **Alternative Ending:** Write different resolution exploring other solutions
4. **Technology Timeline:** Research and predict AI development from now to 2048
5. **Safety Protocol Creation:** Develop guidelines for safe AI integration in communities

**Structure:**

- **Opening** (10 min): Project explanation and choice
- **Work Time** (30 min): Research and planning
- **Closing** (5 min): Project plan sharing with partners

**Assessment:** Project plan quality, connection to story themes

**Day 14: Project Work and Collaboration**

**Objective:** Develop projects with peer feedback

**Materials:** Various supplies, computers for research

**Opening (5 minutes)**

- Review collaboration expectations and peer feedback guidelines

**Main Activity (35 minutes)**

- Independent and collaborative project work
- Peer consultation and feedback sessions
- Teacher conferences on project development

**Closing (5 minutes)**

- Progress sharing and problem-solving assistance

**Assessment:** Effective collaboration, progress toward project goals

**Day 15: Project Presentations and Unit Reflection**

**Objective:** Share learning and synthesize unit themes

**Materials:** Presentation rubric, reflection prompts

**Opening (5 minutes)**

- Presentation expectations and supportive audience guidelines

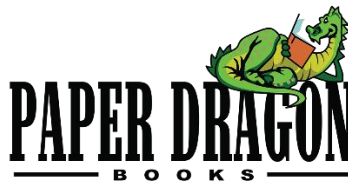
**Main Activity (35 minutes)**

- Student project presentations (4-5 minutes each)
- Audience provides feedback focusing on creativity, connection to themes, and real-world applications

**Closing (5 minutes)**

- Unit reflection: "How has this story changed your thinking about technology's role in our future?"

**Assessment:** Presentation quality, thoughtful unit reflection



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## Assessment Rubric

### Reading Comprehension (25%)

- **Exceeds:** Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of plot, character, and setting
- **Meets:** Shows solid comprehension with appropriate evidence
- **Approaching:** Basic understanding with some support
- **Below:** Limited comprehension evident

### Theme Analysis (25%)

- **Exceeds:** Identifies and analyzes multiple themes with insightful connections to real world
- **Meets:** Recognizes major themes with adequate analysis
- **Approaching:** Identifies basic themes
- **Below:** Minimal theme recognition

### Science Fiction Understanding (25%)

- **Exceeds:** Understands genre conventions and makes sophisticated connections to current technology
- **Meets:** Grasps basic sci-fi elements and some real-world connections
- **Approaching:** Recognizes futuristic setting and technology
- **Below:** Limited understanding of genre elements

### Critical Thinking and Application (25%)

- **Exceeds:** Makes thoughtful connections between story and real-world technology issues
- **Meets:** Shows some application of story themes to current issues
- **Approaching:** Limited connection to real-world applications
- **Below:** Minimal critical analysis

## Differentiation Strategies

### For Struggling Readers:

- Audio support for challenging sections
- Graphic organizers for plot and character tracking
- Partner reading opportunities
- Technology vocabulary support with visual aids

### For Advanced Readers:

- Independent research projects on current AI development
- Leadership roles in literature circles
- Extended analysis of ethical implications
- Cross-curricular connections to computer science concepts





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**For English Language Learners:**

- Visual supports for futuristic concepts and technology
- Collaborative group work emphasis
- Native language discussion opportunities when possible
- Real-world technology connections from students' cultures

**For Students with Different Learning Needs:**

- Multiple project format options (visual, verbal, hands-on)
- Flexible grouping for discussions and activities
- Extra processing time for complex ethical questions
- Choice in how to demonstrate understanding

**Materials List**

- Class set of "Battle for the Park"
- Timeline templates and chart paper
- Computers/tablets for research
- Art supplies for projects
- Current articles about AI development (age-appropriate)
- Images of theme parks and futuristic technology

**Extension Activities**

**Home Connections:**

- Family discussions about technology use and limits
- Research family members' experiences with changing technology
- Create family emergency plans that don't rely solely on technology
- Visit science museums or technology exhibits together

**Community Service:**

- Research local organizations working on digital equity
- Create presentations about safe technology use for younger students
- Interview community members about how technology has changed their work

**Cross-Curricular Connections**

**Science and Technology:**

- Study current AI development and robotics
- Explore how theme parks use technology for experiences
- Research renewable energy sources (for floating cities)
- Basic programming or coding activities



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**Social Studies:**

- Study how technology has changed communities throughout history
- Explore different types of communities and what makes them successful
- Discuss digital citizenship and online safety
- Examine how different cultures integrate technology

**Mathematics:**

- Calculate energy requirements for floating structures
- Analyze data about technology adoption rates
- Explore geometric concepts in futuristic architecture
- Statistics related to AI development and usage

**Real-World Applications**

**Technology Literacy:**

- Research current AI applications in daily life
- Discuss benefits and concerns about increasing automation
- Explore careers in technology and AI development
- Learn about digital safety and privacy

**Critical Thinking:**

- Analyze claims about new technology developments
- Practice identifying reliable sources of information about technology
- Develop skills for evaluating the ethics of new innovations
- Learn to ask thoughtful questions about technological change

**Community Engagement:**

- Understand how individuals can influence technology development
- Practice speaking up about concerns respectfully
- Develop collaboration skills for solving complex problems
- Build awareness of how technology affects different community members