

Jules Verne's Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea

READING

LEVEL
Advanced

NUMBER
C1_4017R_EN

LANGUAGE
English



lingoda

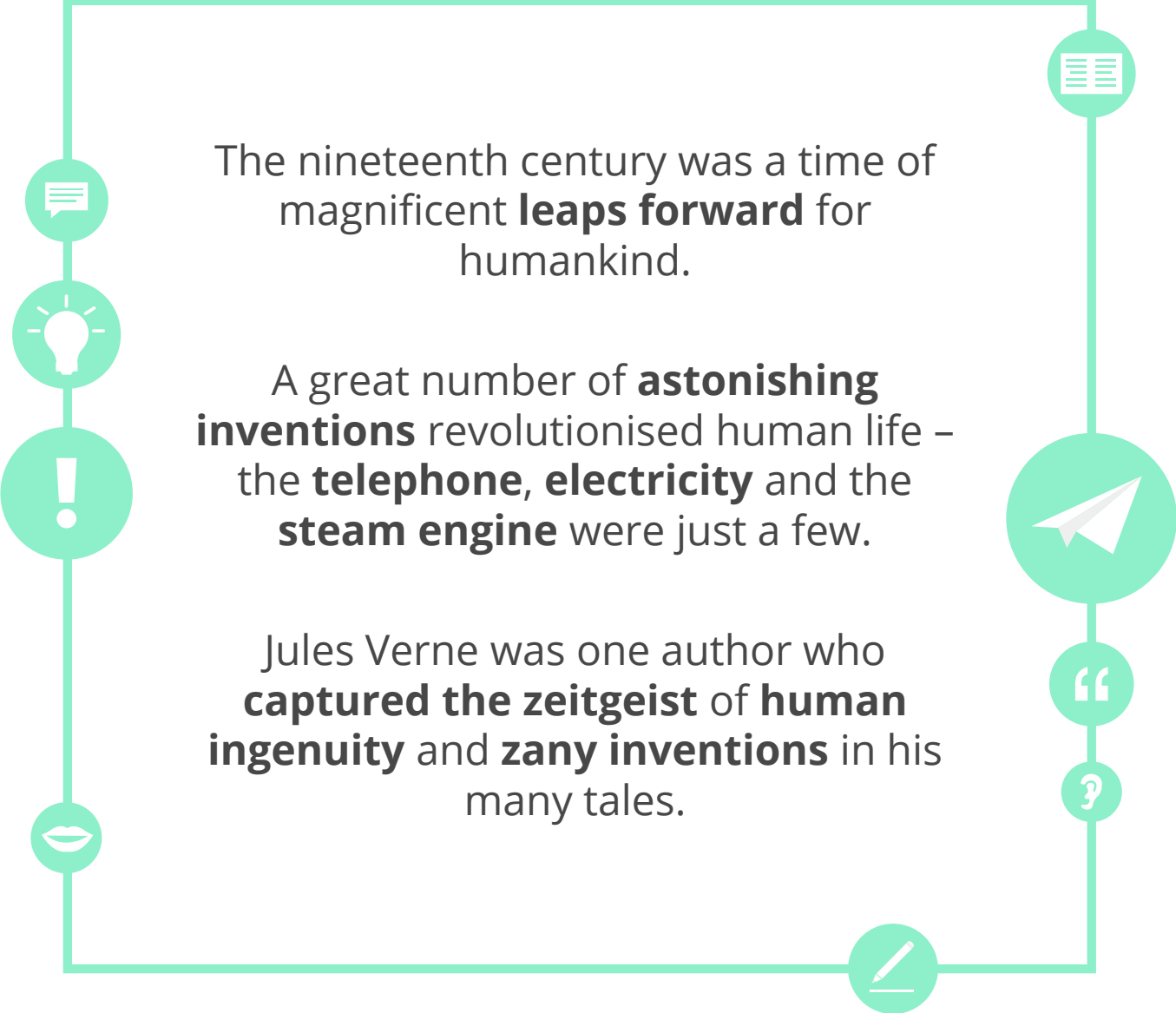




Goals

- Can read and understand a complex literary excerpt from Jules Verne's famous novel.
- Can discuss and evaluate 19th century visions of futuristic technology.





The nineteenth century was a time of magnificent **leaps forward** for humankind.

A great number of **astonishing inventions** revolutionised human life – the **telephone, electricity** and the **steam engine** were just a few.

Jules Verne was one author who **captured the zeitgeist** of **human ingenuity** and **zany inventions** in his many tales.



Inventions

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries were marked by a proliferation of new technological inventions.

Describe the invention in each of the pictures.

Do you know when these technologies were invented?

How have each of these modified human lives?





Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea is a classic science fiction adventure novel, originally published in French. What do you think might happen in the story based on the title?





Vocabulary



The fortune teller claimed to have **prophetic** visions.

He used his **ingenuity** to figure out a better way of working.



His headpiece was **adorned** with eagle feathers.

Joey **rifled** through all his files but couldn't find the form he needed.





Context: Jules Verne's writing



Jules Verne was born in 1828. He studied law in Paris, but turned to writing almost immediately after completing his education. He is chiefly known for his "scientific romances." *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* is perhaps the best example of Verne's tales of the marvels of invention. We have to remember that when it was written in 1873, nobody had yet succeeded in building a submarine. For that reason it was, in a way, a **prophetic** book. Verne's text explored the wonderful possibilities of human **ingenuity** and imagined in wonderful detail the future of one of mankind's inventions. In the following pages, Verne describes the submarine in the book.



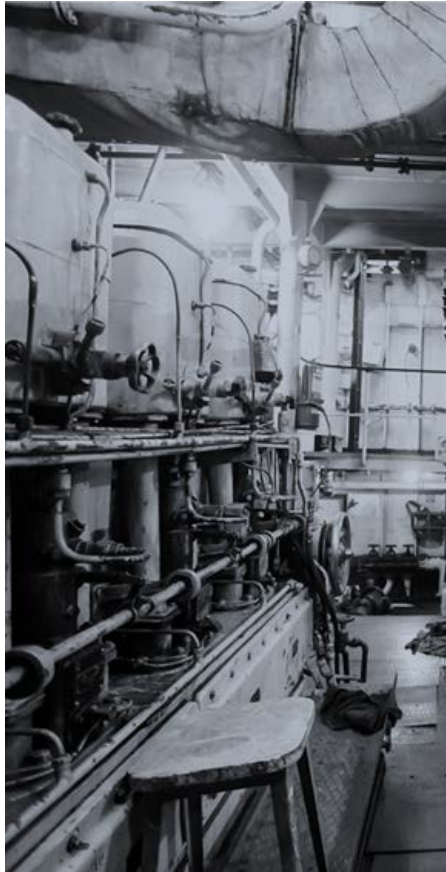
Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea

It was indeed a thing of marvels; for, besides the dining-room, it contained a large library of twelve thousand volumes, a drawing-room measuring thirty feet by eighteen, and fifteen high. The walls of this apartment were **adorned** with masterpieces of the great painters, and beautiful marbles and bronzes. A large piano-organ stood in one corner, and there were glass cases containing the rarest marine curiosities which a naturalist could wish to see. A collection of enormous pearls in a cabinet must have been worth millions, and Captain Nemo told me he had **rifled** every sea to find them.





Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea



The room assigned to me was fitted up with every luxury, yet the captain's own apartment was as simply furnished as a **monastic** cell. In it were contained all the **ingenious** instruments that controlled the movements of the Nautilus, as his submarine was named. The electricity was manufactured by a process of extracting chloride of sodium from the sea-water, but the fresh air necessary for the life of the crew could only be obtained by rising to the surface. The engine-room was sixty-five feet long, and in it was the machinery for producing electricity as well as that for applying the power to the propeller.



Reflecting on the text

What kind of submarine is the Nautilus? Does it sound very realistic from the descriptions in the text? How long do you think it might have taken to build?

big?

small?

advanced?

state-of-the-art?

well or badly designed?



Describe the scene

**Imagine you are onboard the Nautilus.
Describe each of the spaces below using a range of descriptive
vocabulary. What words are already used to describe each of
the rooms?**



Your quarters

The control room

The view from the porthole



Vocabulary



He led a simple, **monastic** life in the mountains.

The city's **reservoir** holds enough water to supply the city for three weeks.



Peter's face was **illuminated** with joy.

There is a vast **subterranean** network beneath the mountains.





Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea

The Nautilus, Captain Nemo explained, was capable of a speed of fifty miles an hour, and could be made to sink or rise with precision by flooding or emptying a **reservoir**. In a box, raised somewhat above the hull and fitted with glass ten inches thick, the steersman had his place, and a powerful electric reflector behind him **illuminated** the sea for half a mile in front.

The submarine also carried a small torpedo-like boat, fitted in a groove along the top, so that it could be entered from the Nautilus by opening a panel, and, after that was closed, the boat could be detached from the submarine, and would then bob upwards to the surface like a cork.

It was on a desert island that Captain Nemo had carried out the building of the Nautilus, and from many different places he had secured the various parts of the hull and machinery, in order to maintain secrecy.



Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*



I was deeply interested in every detail of this extraordinary **vessel** and excited beyond measure at the wonders which awaited me in exploring the world beneath the waves. However, I had still the feeling of a prisoner who dared scarcely hope that **liberty** might some day be **obtained**. But when the metal plates which covered the windows of the saloon were rolled back as we sailed under the water, and on each hand I could see a thronging army of many-coloured aquatic creatures swimming around us, attracted by our light, I was in an **ecstasy** of wonder and delight.



Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*

Then days would pass without Captain Nemo putting in an appearance, and none of the crew were ever to be seen. But the Nautilus kept on its journey through the most fascinating of **subterranean** places.



Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*

Some of the most amazing and beautiful specimens of unknown life passed before my vision on this strange journey, never before seen by the eye of any naturalist. Of the wonders of the deep, I cannot here enter into particulars.

One of my first surprises was to be invited by Captain Nemo to accompany him on a hunting expedition in the marine forest that grew about the base of the little island of Crespo, in the North Pacific Ocean. We were told to make a hearty breakfast, as the jaunt would be a long one. This we did, for we had soon become accustomed to the strange food, every item of which was produced by the sea.





Thinking about machinery

There is a lot of technical detail given about the submarine's machinery. Discuss this with your teacher. What kind of effect does this have?



New perspectives

Contemporary readers can identify the Nautilus as a submarine. However, for readers in Jules Verne's age it would have been a fantastical invention.

Write about an invention which, while common now, would have been difficult to imagine 30 years ago.

communications

transport

appliances



Talk to the teacher

Talk to your teacher about why the subject matter of Jules Verne's story might have been appealing to readers in the nineteenth century.

What do you find appealing about the story so far?



optimism about
humanity's
future

technical detail
and imagination

obsession with
the possibilities
of scientific
discovery

the strange and
fantastical



New words

excursion

We were equipped for a three day **excursion** into the jungle.

seamless

There is a **seamless** transition between songs on that album.

treacherous

The captain adroitly navigated the vessel through the rough and **treacherous** waters.

quadruped

Lions, tigers and elephants are all **quadrupeds** while humans are **bipeds**!



Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*



For our submarine **excursion** we were furnished with diving dresses of **seamless** india-rubber, fitted on the shoulders with a **reservoir** of stored air, its tubes opening into the great copper helmet. We even had powerful air-guns and electric bullets, which proved weapons of deadly precision. When inside our diving dresses, we could not move our feet on account of the enormous **lead** soles, so that we had to be pushed into a **compartment** at the bottom of the vessel, and the iron doors secured behind us. Water was then pumped in, and we could feel it rising around us, until the compartment was full, when an outer door opened and we stepped on to the floor of the sea.



Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*

For some considerable distance we walked along sands of the most perfect smoothness, and then had to make our way over slimy rocks and **treacherous** masses of seaweed, before we reached the fairy-like forest under the sea, where all the branches of the marvellous growths **ascended perpendicularly**.

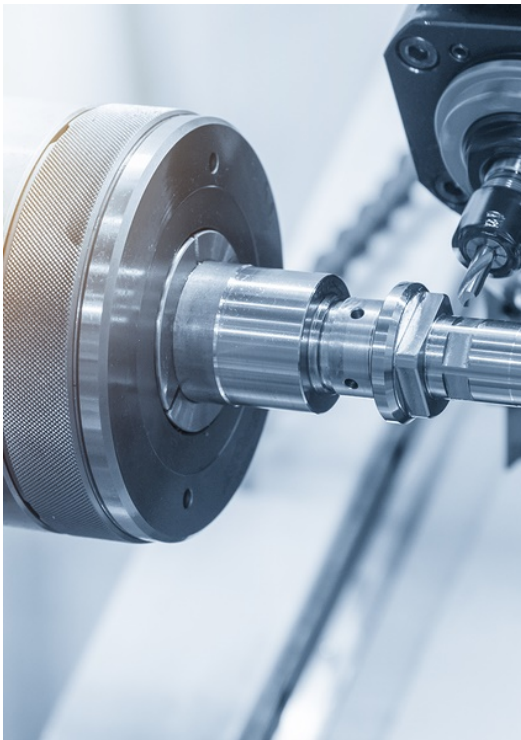
It was indeed a rare experience for me, who had written "The Mysteries of the Great Submarine Grounds," thus to see, at first hand, the life which I had only been able to speculate on before. We captured many rare specimens, and shot a fine sea-otter, the only known **quadruped** that inhabits the rocky depths of the Pacific. It was five feet long, and its skin was worth a hundred pounds.





Comprehension

Read through the excerpt again. Identify any technology that would have been viewed as 'futuristic' by readers in 1873. Which of these inventions now exist today?



deep sea exploration

breathing apparatus

electricity

weaponry

motors



Visions of the future

The nineteenth century was host to a handful of major technological changes which changed daily life profoundly. Comment on the revolutionary nature of each of the technological leaps below. How did it change the way humans led their lives?

steam power

electricity

telegraph

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Future inventions

What technological innovations do you foresee in the 21st century?



Visions of the future

Technological innovation has dramatically reshaped human communities, culture and the way we think and behave. Many express caution about the blind embrace of technology.

Write a reflection on the different opinions below. Do you agree with them?



Technology should be embraced without hesitation. Look how much more comfortable, secure and healthy we are now compared to even 25 years ago!

With every technological innovation we further isolate ourselves from our true nature and reality.



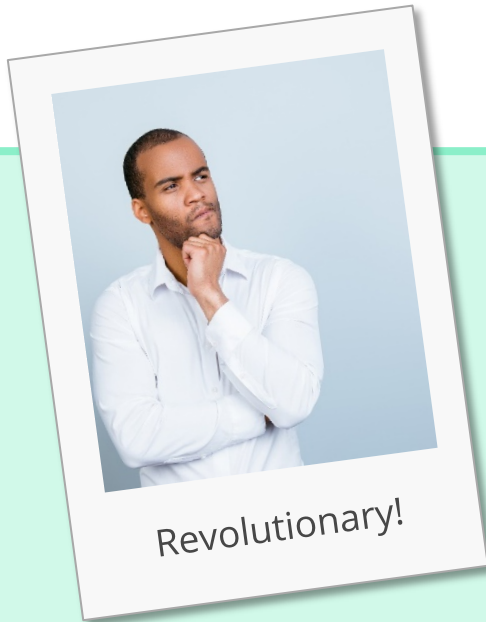
Human institutions like the family and community are under threat from technology that isolates us from each other.

Whether you believe technology is a boon or threat to humankind is irrelevant – scientific progress marches on regardless.





Inventor



You've just had a brilliant idea for an invention and are convinced it will revolutionise your industry. Present your invention to the teacher, and attempt to convince them to help you fund its production!

Remember to try to use persuasive language to convince them to invest!



Writing

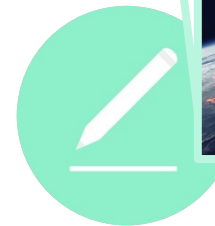
Professor Aronnax and his colleagues are trapped aboard the Nautilus by the mysterious Captain Nemo.

Where will their adventure take them next?

Write a 200 word ending to the story. Use your imagination as this is a science fiction story!

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Try to use some of the new vocabulary from the lesson.



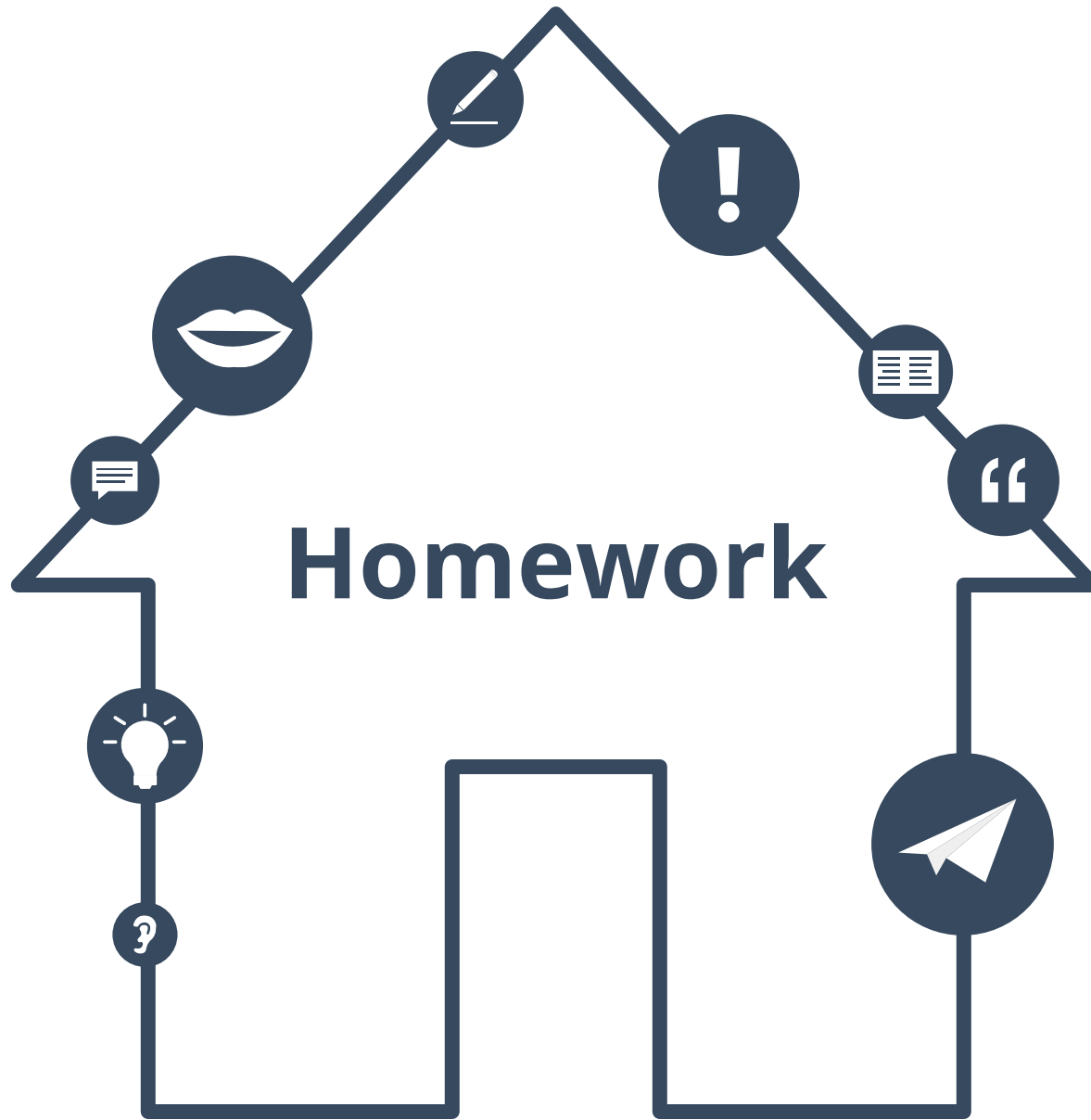


Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!







Vocabulary: adjectives

Verne uses a range of rich vocabulary in *20000 Leagues Under the Sea*.

Create flashcards to develop your vocabulary.
Remember to practice using them in order that they enter your active vocabulary!





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