

Learning Guide for "The Armchair Traveller"

Suitable for ages 7-10

This story can be used to remind children (and adults) of the power of imagination.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you ever get bored when you're at home (alone)? What do you do to amuse yourself?
2. What does Jacques do to get over boredom? Does it work?
3. Try this: First of all, close your eyes. Now, if it's a hot day, try to think of a really cold place like Antarctica or inside a freezer/icebox. If it's a cold day, try to think of a really hot place like the Sahara desert. Do you notice a change in how your body feels?
4. Do you think you could use your imagination in the same way so that aches and pains wouldn't hurt as much? Could you even use it to explore new worlds? With your new power, do you think you could travel through time?
5. Is there something you really want in life (a new toy, a new friend, a pet rabbit, etc.)? What do you think might happen if you pictured it in your mind as if you already had it? Do you think you might get it? Even if you didn't get it in the physical world, how do you think you'd feel if you got it in your "imaginary" world? Try this out for a few weeks and see what happens.
6. What do you think happens when people imagine only "bad" or "negative" things?
7. What do you think would happen if everyone in the whole world imagined "good" or "positive" things?

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8. At the end of the story, how come Jacques ends up surfing a giant wave in Hawaii instead of lying on the beach relaxing like he'd planned? Do you think he still had fun on his Hawaiian vacation? Do you always get exactly what you imagined? Can you still find something enjoyable about whatever you get?