

Chapters 5 & 6

Vocabulary:

Write down the meaning of the following words. Then use each word in a sentence of your own.

1. **substantial**

Definition:

Your sentence:

2. **stifle**

Definition:

Your sentence:

3. **arrogance**

Definition:

Your sentence:

4. **illuminate**

Definition:

Your sentence:

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5. **anticlimax**

Definition:

Your sentence:

6. **nondescript**

Definition:

Your sentence:

7. **myopic**

Definition:

Your sentence:

8. **aberration**

Definition:

Your sentence:

9. **plaintively**

Definition:

Your sentence:

10. **propitious**

Definition:

Your sentence:

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11. **chink**

Definition:

Your sentence:

12. **dissolution**

Definition:

Your sentence:

Dimensions:

Mrs. Who's description of traveling by tesseract might seem awfully confusing. Perhaps the following might help.

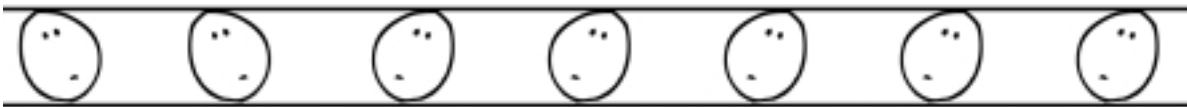
A point has no dimension. It has neither length nor width nor height. We might even think of it as the "zero" or "null" dimension.

The first dimension is a line. It has only length. If you imagine a one-dimensional world, then the inhabitants of that world would all appear to each other as points.



Any person there would only be able to see the front (or back) of his neighbor to the left or the right.

For an example, imagine yourself as a very small pebble lodged in the middle of a drinking straw. You would only be able to move in two directions. If there were any other pebbles in the drinking straw with you, you would only see the ones to the left

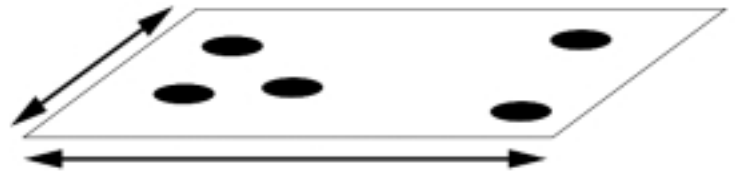


or the right of you. Even if there were one hundred pebbles in the straw, you would only be able to see two of them. You wouldn't be able to move around your neighbors to visit other pebbles. You could never even be sure that more pebbles existed.

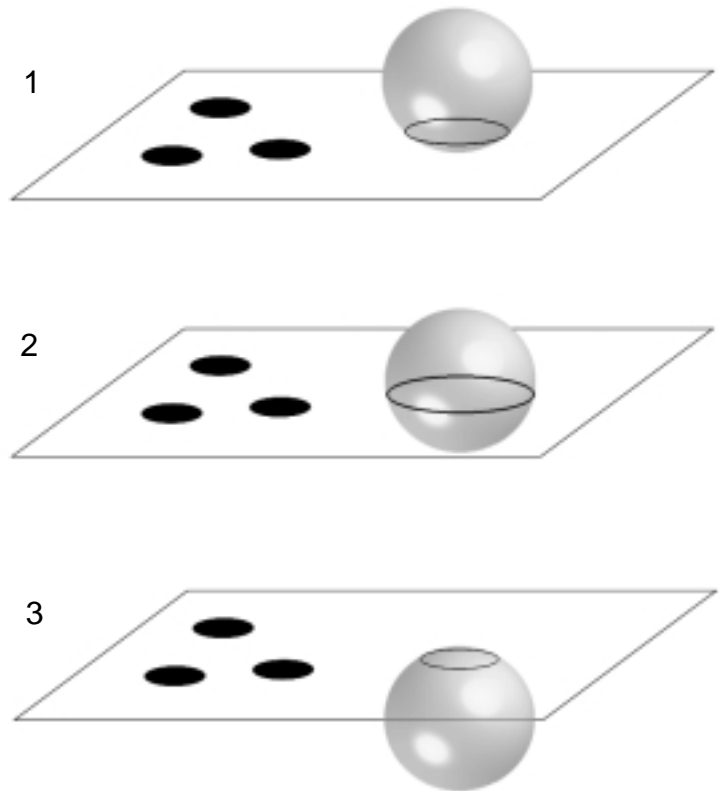
This example is somewhat flawed because even a drinking straw has more than one dimension. A line does not.

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The second dimension is a plane. It has length and width, but no height. Try this example: use a large sheet of paper as a representation of a two dimensional “world.” Cut a number of small circles from another sheet of paper and place them on this “world.” Imagine that these circles are the inhabitants of the two-dimensional world. Assuming that they have some means of mobility, it’s easy to see that these circles have much more freedom of movement than the residents of a one-dimensional world. They could conceivably move around and visit all their neighbors. Without the dimension of height, imagine how these circles must appear to each other.



Now imagine a three-dimensional object, such as a sphere, intersecting this two-dimensional world. To any of the circles living in that world, a sphere would appear as just another circle. (Fig. 1) But as the sphere moved down through their world, it would seem to mysteriously change its size. (Fig. 2, 3). Perhaps this is the reason Mrs. Whatsit can easily change her shape: she is a being from a higher dimension, but appears merely three-dimensional when she enters our three-dimensional world.



Now pick up one of the circles and put it down someplace else on the two-dimensional world. From the point of view of one of those inhabitants their circular friend would have seemed to disappear from one location only to magically reappear in another. Though this movement through “space” is completely normal to you, to

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the inhabitants of a two-dimensional world, it is virtually impossible because they have no conception of “up” or “down.”

In the same way, Mrs. Which, Mrs. Who, and Mrs. Whatsit use a higher dimension to easily transport Meg, Charles, and Calvin to another planet. Like the circle you moved, Meg, Charles, and Calvin moved through a dimension they did not understand to arrive at a location far from their starting point.

Allusion:

An *allusion* is a brief reference to a literary or historical person or event with which the reader is assumed to be familiar. Authors can add meaning to a story by drawing upon the thoughts and feelings a reader associates with the allusion.

Identify the original source the author alludes to in the following passages from *A Wrinkle in Time*.

1. “When shall we three meet again, / In thunder, lightning, or in rain,” came Mrs. Who’s voice. (Chapter 4)
2. The resonant voice rose and the words seemed to be all around them so that Meg felt that she could almost reach out and touch them: “*Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, . . .*” (Chapter 4)
3. Mrs. Who seemed to evaporate until there was nothing but the glasses, and then the glasses, too, disappeared. It reminded Meg of the Cheshire Cat. (Chapter 5)
4. Mrs. Who’s spectacles shone out at them triumphantly, “*And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*” (Chapter 5)

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5. One white-faced man in a dark suit looked directly at the children, said, “Oh, dear, I shall be late,” and flickered into the building.
“He’s like the white rabbit,” Meg giggled nervously. (Chapter 6)

Questions:

1. What is “The Black Thing”?
2. Why did Meg feel “flattened-out” on the second planet they visited?
3. How did the three Mrs. Ws take precautions so Mrs. Murry would not be worried about her children?
4. According to Mrs. Whatsit, why is the earth such a troubled planet?

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5. What do the children see in the crystal ball that reveals the true nature of Mrs. Whatsit?

Thinking About the Story:

6. *Personification* is a literary technique in which animals, objects, or even abstract concepts are given human qualities and characteristics. Though the Happy Medium is a character in the novel, in what way does she *personify* the concept of a “happy medium”? How does the Happy Medium’s planet also reflect the concept of “medium”?
7. How does Meg react to seeing Calvin’s mother in the crystal ball? How did it alter her feelings for Calvin?
8. How does seeing a picture of her own mother give Meg renewed energy?

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9. What “gifts” did each of the three Mrs. Ws give to the children? Complete the table below by listing each gift in the appropriate space.

	Calvin	Meg	Charles Wallace
Mrs. Whatsit			
Mrs. Who			
Mrs. Which			

10. Why does Mrs. Whatsit say that the danger is greatest for Charles Wallace?
11. In general terms, describe the appearance of the town on Camazotz and the behavior of its citizens. What is unusual about the boy bouncing the rubber ball?
12. What is the mother’s reaction when the children knock at the door to return the rubber ball?

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13. Describe the other interactions with the inhabitants living on Camazotz—for example, the paperboy and people on the street.

14. The paper boy tells Charles Wallace,

We are the most oriented city on the planet. There has been no trouble of any kind for centuries. All Camazotz knows our record. That is why we are the capital city of Camazotz. That is why CENTRAL Central Intelligence is located here. That is why IT makes ITs home here.

What do you think “IT” is?

Dig Deeper:

15. When talking about being chosen for this mission, Mrs. Whatsit confides to Calvin and Meg: “But of course we can’t take credit for our talents. It’s how we use them that counts.” What do you think she means by saying that we can’t take credit for our talents?

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16. Read Matthew 25:14–28. The term “talent” found in this parable was originally a unit of weight and then later became a monetary unit. The modern-day usage of “talent” to refer to one’s innate abilities is derived from this original usage. What does this parable teach about how we should use our talents?

17. What talents do you think you have? If you aren’t sure, ask your parents or friends. How can you use your talents in a way that is pleasing to God?

18. Meg tells the Happy Medium that her anger helps her, because when she’s mad she hasn’t got room to be afraid. Later Mrs. Whatsit tells Meg, “Stay angry—you will need all your anger now.”
Can you think of a situation where being angry helped you? Can you think of another time when being angry was harmful? Write about these situations in two or three paragraphs.

19. Read Proverbs 16:32, Proverbs 29:11, Ecclesiastes 7:9, Romans 12:16–21, Ephesians 4:26–27. In one paragraph, summarize what these verses—taken together—teach about anger.

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20. Read each of the passages below, and then write down what caused the anger of the person (or persons) shown.
- a. Exodus 32:1–20 (God, Moses)
 - b. 1 Kings 11:4–13 (God)
 - c. Job 42:7 (God)
 - d. John 2:13–16 (Jesus)
21. What do the examples above suggest about anger as a proper response?
22. In Chapter 5, when Mrs. Whatsit talks about the battle against evil, she prompts the children to think of the fighters on their own planet. Charles Wallace immediately says “Jesus.” Then the children list others, including artists, scientists, and religious figures.
- Read this section again. By including Jesus in this list, do you think the author is suggesting that the others mentioned are *equal* to Jesus? Explain your answer.

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23. Read Colossians 1:15–23. What does this passage tell us about the uniqueness of Jesus?