

# Literacy Skills Teacher's Guide for

## Time for Andrew: A Ghost Story

by

### Mary Downing Hahn

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### Book Information

Mary Downing Hahn, Time for Andrew: A Ghost Story  
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Book Level: 4.5  
Interest Level: MG

When Drew goes to spend the summer with his great-aunt in the family's old house, he is drawn 80 years into the past to trade places with his great-great-uncle, a boy who is deathly ill with diphtheria.

**Award:** State Award

**Topics:** Family Life, Death; Family Life, Illness; Family Life, Misc./Other; Family Life, Uncles; READNOW - Perma-Bound, Perma-Bound - Read Now Grades 6-8; Recommended Reading, California Recommended Lit., English, 6-8; Science Fiction, Time Travel

### Main Characters

Andrew Tyler a twelve-year-old boy who is dying of diphtheria in 1910; he exchanges places with his cousin, Drew, from the future

Blythe Tyler Drew's great-aunt who takes care of Drew for the summer; she owns the old Tyler home and takes care of her father

Drew Tyler a twelve-year-old boy who changes places with his look-alike cousin, Andrew, from 1910

Edward Tyler the old man in the wheelchair, Drew's great-grandfather; he is also the young bully who is Andrew's cousin

Hannah Tyler Andrew's beautiful sister who helps Drew in 1910

Henry and Mildred Tyler (Papa and Mama)  
Andrew's parents

John Larkin Hannah's beau, who teaches Drew boxing moves

Theo Tyler Andrew's rambunctious younger brother

Ward and Nora Tyler (Dad and Mom) Drew's parents, who are on an archeological dig in France

### Vocabulary

**cantankerous** difficult or irritating to deal with

**contrite** extremely sorrowful for wrongdoing

**mendacity** a lie or deception

**mollycoddle** to pamper or indulge with much attention

**trestle** a braced framework of wood or steel designed to carry a railroad over water or a depression

### Synopsis

Twelve-year-old Drew Tyler arrives to spend the summer at his Great-aunt Blythe's rural Missouri home while his parents are on an archeological dig in France. Blythe lives with her aged father, a cantankerous old man who insists on calling Drew "Andrew" and acts as though he knows him. Frightened of the large run-down house, the old man, and the noises from the attic above his room, Drew wishes he were back in Chicago.

The next day Aunt Blythe and Drew discover old family photographs in the attic and notice in one unmarked photo a boy identical to Drew. Later, Drew accidentally finds a bag of marbles with a note that warns the finder to not disturb them. Aunt Blythe says they probably belonged to the young boy, Andrew, who died of diphtheria. Much to Drew's horror, she ignores the warning and takes the marbles, insisting they are too valuable to leave.

That night, after a disconcerting dream about marbles, Drew awakens to footsteps on the attic steps above his room. When the door opens, Drew and Andrew, a relative from the past, stare at each other. Except for the pajamas, they are identical. Though Drew presumes Andrew is a ghost, Andrew adamantly denies being dead, and after he convinces Drew, they realize the only way to prevent Andrew from dying soon is to exchange places and let modern medicine cure his illness. After changing pajamas, Drew calls for Aunt Blythe and then

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retreats to the attic, where he faints.

When he comes to, he realizes it is 1910. The family, believing Drew to be Andrew, is overjoyed at the boy's miraculous recovery. They attribute his memory loss and shyness as a result of the high fever. After several days of bed rest, Drew decides he must play the part of Andrew until they can exchange places again. Although his family accepts his uncharacteristic behavior, Theo cannot wait for Drew to be himself again and to fight with their hostile and unlikable cousin, Edward. Drew watches what he says to avoid suspicion about the switch.

Two weeks later, Andrew and Drew meet again in the attic. Though Andrew has been cured, he is unwilling to change back until he gains strength, so he makes a gentleman's agreement to play ringer, a marble game. As long as Andrew wins, Drew must remain in 1910.

The next day, Drew enlists the help of Hannah, Andrew's older sister, to learn how to play marbles. During her lessons, Hannah tells Drew about the family and her views on issues in 1910. When John Larkin, Hannah's beau, takes a photograph of the Tyler family in his Model T, Drew fears he and Andrew are changing history, since he never saw a photo that matched this event in the attic collection. Further complications arise when Drew and Theo get into a dispute with Edward at a store, and Edward reminds Drew of the trestle dare Andrew made. Edward insults Drew, who refuses to fight, which irritates Theo.

Confronting Andrew that night, Drew asks about the trestle dare. Andrew's concern is that Drew is ruining his reputation by refusing to fight Edward. Andrew informs Drew that he has to jump into the water from a high railroad trestle. Andrew once again wins at marbles, causing Drew to feel that he will never get back to his real time.

The next day, John Larkin shows Drew some boxing moves so Drew can protect himself against Edward. Later that week during an afternoon croquet game, a homesick Andrew appears on the lawn, attempting

to get his sister and brother's attention, but only Drew can see him. That night Andrew asks Drew about the old man in the wheelchair at Aunt Blythe's. Drew realizes that Andrew is not finding his victories at marbles so satisfying and asks if Andrew will switch places just until the trestle dare is over. Andrew refuses, reasoning that if he is fated to die soon, he might be killed in the process.

The next day, Theo and Drew meet Edward on the trestle. Following some taunts, Edward lunges at Theo, loses his balance, and falls into the river. Fearing Edward is drowning, Drew jumps in and pulls him to shore. Edward shows little thanks and abruptly picks a fight. Although Drew gets a black eye, he breaks Edward's nose in the process, leading to a whipping from Papa later in the day. During dinner, Drew realizes the old man at Aunt Blythe's house is Edward. When the boys meet in the attic that night, Drew tries to convince Andrew that they have come close to changing history. Andrew decides Drew still must win his way back. Drew is on the verge of winning the marble game when Hannah interrupts them. Andrew panics when his sister cannot see or feel him, and he desperately wants Drew to win. Believing Drew is sick, she runs for their parents, but just before they enter the attic, Drew shoots the winning marble out of the ring. As the family lays Drew in bed, he tells them he loves them. When they leave the room, the boys exchange pajamas.

Before going to the attic, Andrew tells Drew to check the gravestones behind the house to see if he really did live. He swears to Drew that they will meet again. Drew faints in the attic and awakens to find Aunt Blythe near him. The next day, Aunt Blythe tells him her elderly cousin Hannah is coming to visit. When Hannah arrives that afternoon, an old gentleman is with her. He and Drew recognize each other and, while alone, Andrew thanks Drew for giving him a life he otherwise would not have had. Before leaving, Andrew gives Drew the bag of marbles, and Drew promises to always keep Andrew in his heart.

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### Open-Ended Questions

Use these open-ended questions as the basis for class discussions, student presentations, or extended writing assignments.

#### Initial Understanding

Andrew thanks Drew for the time he gave him, which allows Andrew to grow old and experience many things. What things did Drew have the chance to experience in 1910 that he would not have known about from his contemporary world?

*Drew becomes part of a loving family and has siblings in 1910. He rides in a Model T Ford when automobiles were newly invented. He sees gaslights and the beginnings of indoor plumbing while still using an outdoor pump. Drew hears the views of Hannah and her mother on the subjects of women's rights and ladylike behavior. He experiences physical punishment from a strict but fair father. He learns how children have fun without electronic entertainment.*

#### Literary Analysis

In what ways do Andrew and Drew take on each other's personality?

*Drew must stand up for himself in fights with Edward, which is totally opposite of how he initially acts. He shows his bravery when he jumps from the trestle and climbs the tree despite his fears. Drew eventually accepts punishment, as Andrew once did, without crying. Meanwhile, Andrew becomes easily frightened of things, much like Drew used to. As an older adult, Andrew acts like a gentleman and credits Drew for his influence.*

#### Inferential Comprehension

How are the ways parents raised children in 1910 different from today's standards? Use examples from the story.

*The Tylers are strict but fair parents, so the whippings that Mr. Tyler gives are not considered child abuse. Although he uses a belt, he limits punishment to five lashings and always explains the reason for the punishment. Mrs. Tyler expects the children to help with chores, such as weeding gardens or canning fruit. Polite behavior is expected as the standard. Adults are always to be treated with respect.*

#### Constructing Meaning

How would Drew's firsthand knowledge of what happened in the past help him in dealing with his great-grandfather, Edward?

*Drew would understand why his great-grandfather dislikes his relatives, and Drew could reassure Edward that he was not there to reclaim the house. Because Drew realizes that his looks remind Edward of Andrew, Drew can understand why Edward snaps at him.*

### Teachable Skills

**Understanding Hist./Cultural Factors** Hannah talks about suffrage and voting rights for women. Have students research the Women's Suffrage Movement, Elizabeth Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and the Nineteenth Amendment. Have them give short reports to the class about this period in United States history.

**Comparing and Contrasting** When two people who look identical change places the results can be humorous. View Disney's *The Parent Trap*, in which twins meet at summer camp and exchange places. Have students review the plot of both the movie and the book to find similarities and differences in the ways the characters must maintain each other's identities.

**Describing Actions or Events** Andrew and Drew play a game with marbles called ringers. Explain

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the rules to the class and have students practice playing marbles. Have a tournament to determine the best players in the class.

**Understanding the Main Idea** In *Time for Andrew*, time travel causes Drew to see things differently and forces him to adapt to his new surroundings. View the animated version of *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Have students explain how the time-traveling main characters in each story adjust to living in a different time.