

# Typical fantasy in A Wrinkle in Time

Fantasy is the genre for imagining impossible or improbable things. A trope is a significant and common theme. This essay explores the elements of narrative in *A Wrinkle in Time*. Is it science fiction, adventure or fantasy writing? This text is a typical fantasy novel. The characters, themes and settings are fantasy tropes that are seen time and time again in fantastical novels. *A Wrinkle in Time* has time and space travel, magical beings, mentors, a quest and an unlikely hero. These elements make characters, themes and settings in *A Wrinkle in Time* typical fantasy.

The characters in *A Wrinkle in Time* are perfect examples of fantasy. IT says "For you, as well as for the rest of all the happy, useful people on this planet, I, in my own strength, am willing to assume all the pain, all the responsibility, all the burdens of thought and decision." (Chapter 7) This element of fantasy is the insurmountable force that must be overcome by some plucky young heroes. On Camazotz there is no individuality, everyone is controlled by the evil overlord, IT. IT believes that by taking away isolation and individual thought everyone will be united. IT must be overcome by some plucky, unlikely heroes with good in their hearts, willing to overcome the darkness. Mrs Who, Mrs Which and Mrs Whatsit are also examples of fantasy characters. They are all unconventional and wise. Mrs Whatsit wisely imparts her knowledge: "But of course we can't take any credit for our talents. It's how we use them that counts." (Chapter 5) This quote shows the wise leader trope, the Gandalf of *A Wrinkle in Time*. Their motives and exact history aren't always clear but they are passing down their knowledge and mentoring their young charges. Mrs Who speaks in quotes because she finds it difficult to speak in her own sentences. Mrs Which is the oldest of the beings, she stutters and finds it hard to materialize. Mrs Whatsit is the youngest, therefore she finds it most easy to materialize as a human, she gave her life as a star to push back the darkness. They will be watching from afar when their charges enter the fray to save the world.

There are many typical fantasy themes in *A Wrinkle in Time*. Good vs evil, friendship, love, bravery and epic adventures are recurring themes that teach readers what is important in life. "To love is to be vulnerable; and it is only in vulnerability and risk — not safety and security — that we overcome darkness." (Chapter 5) This quote has the effect of showing that even though the children may not make it out alive, their mission is too important to give up. It perfectly illustrates the good vs evil and love themes that occur throughout the book. Love is demonstrated as Meg and Calvin grow close and care for each other as they adventure. Love and epic adventures are shown by Meg and Charles Wallace when they find their father and rescue him from the clutches of the evil overlord. Friendship is shown when the children meet Mrs Whatsit and co. and are cared for and taught by them. Charles

Wallace protecting his family and fighting against IT exhibits good vs evil and bravery. The book also gives life lessons: be yourself, live life how you want to, don't care what other people think of you. "People are more than just the way they look" is a quote from Mrs Murry that she gives when trying to enforce Meg's self esteem. Meg learns to accept herself for who she is, Calvin finds a caring family that will accept him and Charles Wallace knows never to stop fighting for his family's protection. The supernatural themes in *A Wrinkle in Time* are typical fantasy tropes that are fed into an atypical storyline.

The settings in *A Wrinkle in Time* are certainly typical fantasy. Uriel is a planet with a very common fantasy landscape: rolling green hills, spring breezes and mountains in the distance. "They had left the silver glint of a biting autumn evening; and now around them everything was golden with light. The grasses of the field were a tender new green, and scattered about were tiny multicoloured flowers. Meg turned slowly to face a mountain reaching so high into the sky that its peak was lost in a crowd of puffy white clouds." (Chapter 4) This is the technique of the sanctuary, a calm environment, flowers, a nice spring breeze. The effect is giving a relaxing environment for rest and rejuvenation. This setting is used in lots of fantasy texts: the shire in *The Lord of the Rings* is an example of this setting. It is a plain country field with a nice atmosphere, spring flowers and a warm breeze. This setting is also used in *A Secret Garden* when the moor is warming up on a nice spring day. Uriel is a safe place to observe the Dark Thing and the comforting mood reinforces the idea that it is a secure place to tesser to and no one will harm them while they recover and learn.

In conclusion, *A Wrinkle in Time* is a typical fantasy text. The characters, themes and settings all work together to create a fantasy story. The language forms and explanations of difficult concepts make for an interesting and thoughtful book. The characters represent common tropes. The themes show good values for us to have. There are a variety of settings to show the immense distance travelled by tessering. With the foundation of fantasy tropes, *A Wrinkle in Time* is a typical fantasy text.