

# High Concept

Time Mystery Mischief is an Role Playing Game set in the future. The player is a member of a family in a small town which has a time machine for recreational use. The player discovers, however, that one of the villagers is trapping the rest of the town's people in the past using the time machine. Deciding to save the town, the player tries to locate every member of the village in space and time, and return them to their homes. The time machine is only useful, however, if you know where you're trying to go, and when you want to be there. As such, the player must use knowledge of the past (learned through the game) to collect historical 'artifacts' that, when inspected with various tools, reveal information about where villagers have been placed. Tools used will range from library research to radio carbon dating, and will help the player find discrepancies in history so that they can travel back to the proper time period and rescue each villager.

## Overview of Game

### *Premise and Story Synopsis*

You, the protagonist, are on a school trip with the librarian, Prof. Woodsworth... through time! The village in which you live, Taranheim, is the only village in the world that has a time machine available for recreational and educational purposes. Upon your return to the village, you and the librarian find that everyone in the village have gone missing. You set out to explore this mystery while Prof. Woodsworth goes to check out the time machine and tells you to meet him back at the library. After wandering around, you happen upon General Eric Vladimir Lynne, another member of the village whom you have known all your life. He is engaged in a soliloquy about his nefarious deeds - he is the one who has been abducting villagers. He's kidnapping them in order to secure use of the time machine only for himself, in order to conquer the world!

Upon hearing this, you head back to the library to talk to Prof. Woodsworth, and tell him what you saw. He reacts by laughing, "You are still a young lad/lass, young, Gen. Eric V. Lynne would never do something like that! I know he is a good person... you must be mistaken. He has probably been abducted like the rest of the villagers."

The librarian then explains to you that the time machine has a number of limitations. Nobody knows how it got there and most are not especially good at using it. You can't travel into the future, only to the past (such that, although you can interact with characters from other times, you cannot take historical figures to the present). You can't travel back onto your own timeline - you have to go to times before you were born. Lastly, you need a "return device" in order to come back to your present time. Then, after looking at some books on the history of your town, the two of you realize that the villagers have been trapped at various points in history.

From this point, you start searching for artifacts that will assist you in finding the villagers stuck in the past. The librarian often gives 'hints' as to where to look for artifacts. Once you've found an artifact, the librarian helps suggest tools that you might use to better understand what the artifact is telling you. From there, the player will find the analysis point (a laboratory, a library, the local historical society, etc.) and analyze the artifact (via mini-game). When analyzed, the artifacts should show a historical

anomaly that will offer some insight into where and when to find a villager, allowing the player to go and retrieve the villager using the time machine. Each mini-game represents a different analysis method.

To ensure the player is learning as they go, the time machine asks the user a series of simple, multiple choice questions. These questions are designed to reinforce the learning objective of what tool they just used to learn about the artifact, and what they were able to learn. After rescuing enough villagers, the player (and town) confront Gen. Eric V. Lynne, and banish him from their town.

### ***Mini-game Design***

Mini-games are designed to vary considerably based on the method they're trying to demonstrate. A mini-game for DNA Analysis might be fake 'DNA sequencing' as done by a *Bejeweled*-like game. The purpose of the mini-game would be to link strands of colored pieces, each piece corresponding to A, T, C or G, the 4 types of nucleotide bases used in DNA. Alternatively, a scrambled-picture puzzle might represent restoring an artifact or document that has dates on it that you need, but has been partially destroyed from time. A simple math puzzle game could help the player deduce when a villager was relocated to. Using the date that they were hijacked, their age, and historical references to them in old newspapers, they might be able to deduce things like “they were 32 when they left, but in this paper from the year 3125, they were 47, thus they were placed in that time period sometime around the year 3110”.

### **Concept art**



Protagonist and the Librarian



Gen. Eric V. Lynne

The characters on the left are the actual in-game avatars for the main character and the librarian. The rendering of the villain (right) is purely concept-art, and will be modified for in-game viewing.