

WARNING:

HUMOUR

Timothy Ward

This Article Is A Waste Of Time



Today's topic, ladies and gentleman, is: Time. We're going to talk about time today because I never seem to have enough of it. And I figure that if I dedicate a whole column to the subject of time and stress some of it's finer points, then perhaps Father Time will show his appreciation by granting me a few extra hours each day. This will allow me to be able to complete a couple more important tasks each day such as hitting the 'Snooze' button on my alarm clock at least 15 more

times each morning. And speaking of snoozing, there will be none of that during today's lesson which will begin right now:

Time is defined by the The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language as: 'A nonspatial continuum in which events occur in apparently irreversible succession from the past through the present to the future.' This definition leads us to the obvious question: If a definition contains 20 word, 5 of which contain 10 or more letters, and it still doesn't make much sense, isn't it time to get another dictionary?

Of course, dictionaries aren't the only people who have trouble with time. The ancient Mayans, for example, struggled to understand time for centuries and never got it quite right. One look at their calender clues you in to this fact. The Mayan calender had 18 months, one of which was called ChikChan (short for May), and each month had 20 days. There was even one month, Wayeb, that had only 5 days. As you can imagine, this horribly inaccurate calender made scheduling important events like the Super Bowl next to impossible. It also left them wide open to insults from other ancient civilizations, like the Sumerians for example, who

had fairly accurate calendars.

The Sumerian calendar had 365 days per year and even incorporated a leap year. Sadly, there was no Presidents Day, Martin Luther King Day, or Arbor Day incorporated into the Sumerian calendar which is why the Sumerian civilization was eventually wiped out. Such flagrant calendar discrimination, even in the Dark Ages, could not be tolerated.

Since we have covered all pertinent information available about calendars, I think it's high time we expand our understanding of time by discussing another mechanism by which we mortals judge the passing of it. But first, does anyone know where the phrase 'high time' comes from? Is there such a thing as 'low time'. Feel free to ponder these questions quietly as we move on to discussing: The Clock.

A clock, for those of you who don't know, is defined by The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language as...Wait a second! Let's not even go there. We're already pretty confused as it is. Let's just all agree that a clock is a device that has lots of numbers and two arms and makes it's living by juggling minutes and seconds.

I feel the extreme need to insert a time cliché here. This cliché makes absolutely no sense whatsoever and probably has pagan, barbaric origins, but I think it summarizes what we've learned thus far in our discussion. So here goes our first time cliché 'A stitch in time saves nine'. And now back to the show.

There have been numerous different kinds of clocks throughout history. Many of them made absolutely no sense whatsoever. A good example of this is the ancient Egyptian water clock, which was basically just a bowl with a hole in the bottom of it. There were markings on the inside of the bowl that measured the passage of 'hours' as the water level reached them. One of the obvious problems with this clock was the fact that whenever working-class Egyptians wanted to get off work early they would keep taking little sips of water from the bowl/clock throughout the day. This was one of the reasons it took so long to finish the Pyramids. That and the lack of power

tools.

Time doesn't permit us to talk about the other types of ancient clocks like obelisks, sundials, and hemicycles. And there definitely isn't time to go into merkhets.

Speaking of merkhets, a close cousin of the clock is the watch. The watch is the time-telling device that most of us use today. We do not however, use it to tell time. We use it to do numerous other tasks that watch manufacturers have incorporated into watches like instant messaging, reading email, and fast forwarding the DVD player. There's even a new watch on the market that comes equipped with a radiation detector. And you

laughed at the Egyptians for drinking from their time-telling devices.

Obviously, time is not something that can be explained in just one lesson. There's a ton of more interesting stuff we could go into about time but, frankly, I don't feel like taking the time to look it up right now. I believe I've achieved my goal of using as many time clichés as I possibly could in one article and now, I think it's time to call an extended timeout on this whole time subject. I'm sure when I do write the follow-up to this article that it will be just in the nick of time. Probably

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sometime around Wayeb 1st.

About The Author

Timothy Ward invites you to subscribe to his humor column 'I Never Said I Was Normal' at <http://timward.1afm.com>.