



BATTLEFIELD EARTH

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Did reading the author's introduction to *Battlefield Earth* change or enforce your view of science fiction and, if so, in what way? What examples of science fiction predicting the future can you think of?

PART 1

In the first chapter we find out that the alien invaders discovered Earth as a result of a probe sent into distant space with directions and information about the Earth and its people. Today we are sending out similar probes and radio signals to "find out if sentient life exists on other planets." Do you feel this is a wise thing to do or very unwise and, if so, why?

PART 2

Terl has a learning machine that he uses to impart data into Jonnie's mind at a high rate of speed. Do you see a device like this being a realistic way to educate people in the future? Explain the implications of such a machine, good or bad.

PART 3

Leverage is a big part of Terl's character. Describe exactly what leverage is and give some specific examples of its use. Do you consider someone who looks for and uses leverage a good or bad person and how would you handle someone in your life who had this trait?

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PART 4

Battlefield Earth and *Star Trek* are not the first works of science fiction that have used the concept of teleportation to move people or objects across distances between planets and galaxies. Do you have a concept of how this theory works and do you think it could ever be developed as a workable way of moving people and objects through the vast distance in space?

PART 5

In Part 5, Chapter 4, Jonnie becomes aware of the difference between the elements in Psychlo texts and Earth texts. The term “periodic law” is used in relation to a table of known elements. What do you know about this law and its relevance in chemistry and metallurgy and what did this reveal to Jonnie in relation to Psychlo?

PART 6

Why do you think L. Ron Hubbard chose the Scots to be the key peoples of Earth to help Jonnie defeat the Psychlos? What do you know about the history of Scotland and did this make you want to find out more about Scotland and its inhabitants?

PART 7

During the time since the Psychlos conquered Earth, certain objects on the planet have been destroyed with age while some things have been preserved. Explain this scientific phenomena.

PART 8

What are “night glasses”? What are their primary functions and what science is their development based on? Which animals have the ability to see in the dark and how is their ability similar to the function of night-vision glasses?

PART 9

When Jonnie explained to the people in the valley that it was the environment that was making them gaunt and ill and difficult to bear children, then offered to take them to a town where they could prosper and survive, they turned him down. Why do you think they made this nonsurvival decision and do you think this has any correlation to the present time behavior of certain groups? If so, which ones?

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PART 10

One of the key vehicles used in the control and original subjugation of the human race by the Psychlos was drones. As drones are becoming ever more popular with governments and individuals in present time, what benefits and dangers do you see with this trend?

PART 11

Do you know why man (and in this instance, aliens) look upon gold as a valuable commodity and why it has been used through the ages as money or a substitute for money? Give some of the attributes that make it so valuable and why its value changes so dramatically with time.

PART 12

When you got to the section of the book where Jonnie had Terl at his mercy and could have killed him, did you feel it was wise of Jonnie to let him live? Did you see Jonnie's logic in keeping him alive? Explain your answer.

PART 13

In Part 13, Chapter 3, it says the Psychlos in Cornwall, over the centuries, would go out on their days off and gun down humans beyond count for sport. Do you see any correlation between this and what happened to the American buffalo back in the nineteenth century and similar events in present time? Give your reasoning behind your answer.

PART 18

How did the monetary systems set up by the new council of the Earth compare to today's monetary system and do you feel today's system is better or worse?

How do today's advances in brain implant technology compare to the implants found in the brains of the Psychlos? Explain how ethics relates to this technology.

PART 22

The following line is used by one of the intergalactic officials circling Earth: "That was the trouble with combined forces, everybody tried to run everybody else's ship!" Is this a valid problem in all such cooperative ventures and how could this be avoided?

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PART 26

How likely do you think it is that there are one or more alien races out there in the universe? And if there are other sentient beings living on other planets, do you think they will be similar to or very different from human beings?

PART 27

How accurately did you feel the book captured the ethnic and personality traits of the main Earth races most prominent in the book: American, Chinese, Russian, etc. Explain the key differences you felt between them.

PART 28

In the final chapters of the book we discover the part that the intergalactic empire bankers play in all this. Do you find any similarity between the galactic bankers and the bankers on planet Earth today? Explain the similarities and differences you see and give your opinion of their merits.

PART 30

How does Jonnie resolve the Psychlo ingrained philosophy of the use of fear and war that has become embedded in the cultures of these planetary nations? Do you see any similarities in today's Earth culture and, if so, explain with specific examples any ideas you have for ending these destructive traits?

PART 32

This book was written in the early 1980s, before the world of advanced computers and communication systems. Do you think a lot of the things represented in the book predicted some of these advances and, if so, in what way?

EPILOGUE

In the Epilogue, there are several points covered: Taxation, types of government, education, adulation, etc. Taking up each of these points, what message do you think L. Ron Hubbard was trying to send to the reader in regard to each? How does this align with or differ from your own personal views?