

By Ellen Duthie &  
Daniela Martagón

# THE FUTURE IS WOW!

IDEAS FOR LOOKING AT, READING,  
DRAWING, TALKING AND THINKING  
ABOUT THE FUTURE

THE FUTURE IS WOW! is an international project where Wonder Ponder invites people of all ages to imagine, write, draw, talk and ask themselves interesting questions about the future, to think both deeply and playfully about the future we want and the future we do not want, and the possibility of doing something about it.

It is part of the research for a book we will publish in 2022 and it was created within the framework of the workshop programme for the 2021-2022 season at Espacio Abierto Quinta de los Molinos in Madrid (Spain). After using this booklet for reading, talking, drawing, and writing, there are several ways in which you can help us with our project. You can take pictures of your interview with the human being from 2984 (page 10) and the postcard to the future (page 11) and send them to wonderponderfuture-questions@gmail.com, stating the name and age of the person asking the questions. Those of you who want to go all the way could send us images of all the pages in the booklet where you have contributed drawings or questions—we'd love to see them! We will make a selection of all the questions received from children like you, and include them in a special digital publication.

**WONDER  
PONDER**

wonderponderonline.com

WILL WE EVOLVE IN  
UNEXPECTED WAYS?

WHAT WILL  
THE FUTURE  
BE LIKE?

WILL WE LEARN  
HOW TO COMMUNICATE  
WITH OTHER SPECIES?

WILL WE PUT  
AN END TO ALL  
WARS?

DOES THE  
FUTURE  
EXIST?

WILL WE  
MANAGE TO  
STOP CLIMATE  
CHANGE?

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE  
THE FUTURE TO BE?

HOW  
WOULDN'T  
YOU LIKE THE  
FUTURE TO  
BE?

HOW MANY  
POSSIBLE  
FUTURES  
ARE THERE?

WHAT IF THE  
FUTURE IS  
NOW?



If it was possible to know the future, would you want to know everything or only some parts of it? If only some parts of it, which parts and why? And why not the others?



Can the future be changed?

Would there be any advantages to knowing the future?

Would there be any disadvantages to knowing the future?

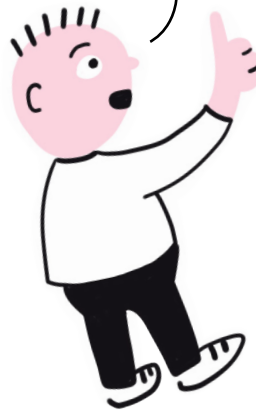
What would you ask the fortune-teller?

Would life be boring if we knew the future, or not necessarily?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW YOUR FUTURE?



Will I ever experience true love?



What questions will tomorrow's test include?



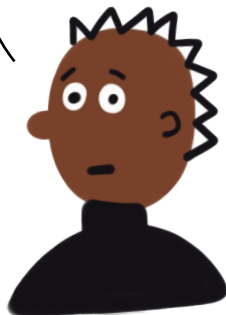
Will it ever stop hurting?



What numbers will win the lottery?



Will I be happy?



Will I have a job that I enjoy?



WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW WHEN YOU ARE GOING TO DIE? WHY?

YES

NO

MAYBE

# HOW MANY WAYS OF READING THE FUTURE ARE THERE?

If you close your eyes and think of the most unlikely way of reading the future that you can come up with, someone, somewhere in the world and at some time in history, has probably thought of it before you and even, perhaps, tried it out. Reading the future from the observation of a cockerel pecking grains? Alectryomancy. Observing how wax melts and drawing conclusions about the future? Carrromancy. Telling the future based on careful inspection of the entrails of sacrificed animals? Haruspicy. Throwing stones and watching how they fall? Cleromancy. Telling the future from the shape of clouds? Nephomancy. Studying palm lines? Chiromancy. Everything has been thought of before!

Some of these ways of 'reading' the future (perhaps all of them) make us laugh, but human beings make predictions all the time and many of them are very useful and relatively reliable. What are some of the more reliable ways of predicting the future? What are they based on? What would you be brave enough to predict?



WRITE YOUR PREDICTION FOR THE FUTURE:



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# WHAT WOULD A 'ONE HUNDRED PERCENT' VIRTUAL LIFE BE LIKE?

If someone invented a Wonderlife machine in the future, would you connect to it?

Can you be absolutely sure that you are not already connected to a machine like Wonderlife?

Are real things better than virtual things? Why? Does it matter if something is real or virtual?

Is it possible to be happy without any moments of unhappiness?

What is better, a 'real' life with some moments of unhappiness, or a 'fake' life of permanent happiness? Why?

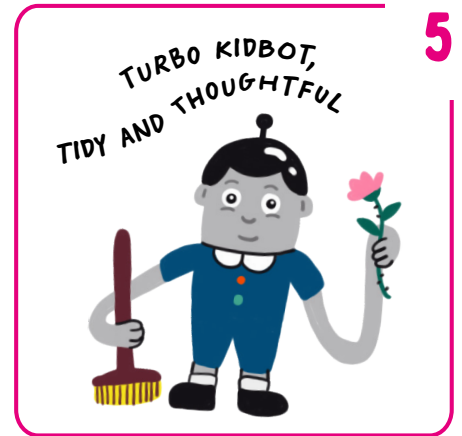
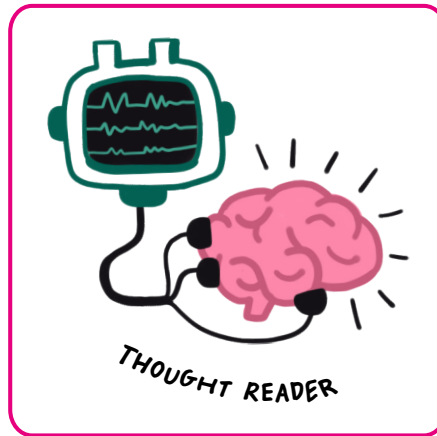
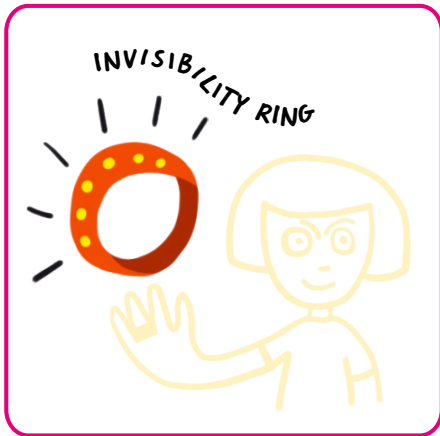
Would the Wonderlife machine belong more in a nightmarish future or a dreamy future? Why?



'It's simple. They plug you in and BAM!, you live a life of perfect happiness without ever suspecting that none of it is real.'

This scene is included in Pinch Me!, within the Visual Philosophy for All Ages series by Wonder Ponder.





## GALLERY OF INVENTIONS OF THE FUTURE

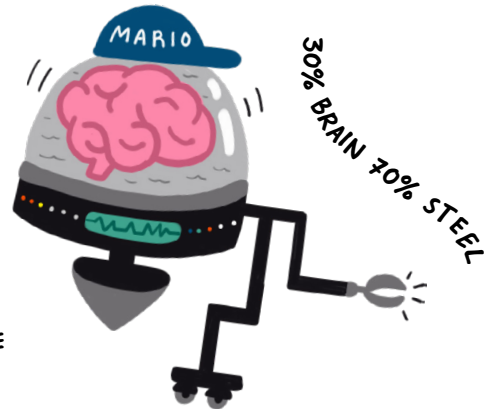
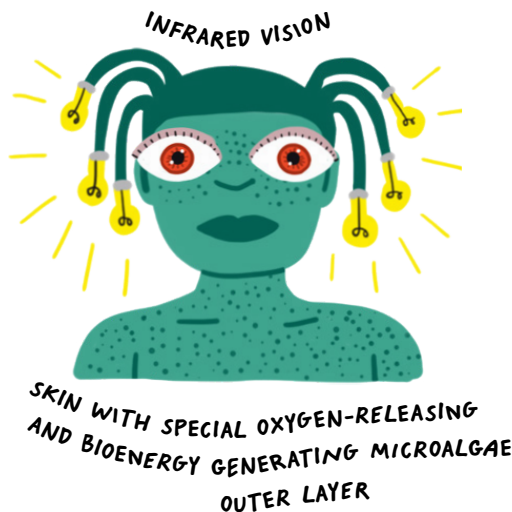
We present you with three super inventions of the future. They will be here in no time! Look carefully at the drawing and read the name of each invention. Which of them would you like someone to invent in the future? Which of them would you rather was never ever invented? Why? Which is the most fun? The most useful? The most dangerous? The cleverest? Why? Would any of these inventions belong in an ideal future? What about in a nightmare future?

## MY INVENTIONS OF THE FUTURE

Now it's your turn to work at the department of inventions for the future. You can think of inventions you would love, inventions you would find terrifying, inventions that might solve problems for humanity, or inventions that would simply make our lives more pleasant, easier, or more fun. Don't forget to give your inventions a good name!

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# POSSIBLE FUTURE EVOLUTIONS OF THE HUMAN BODY

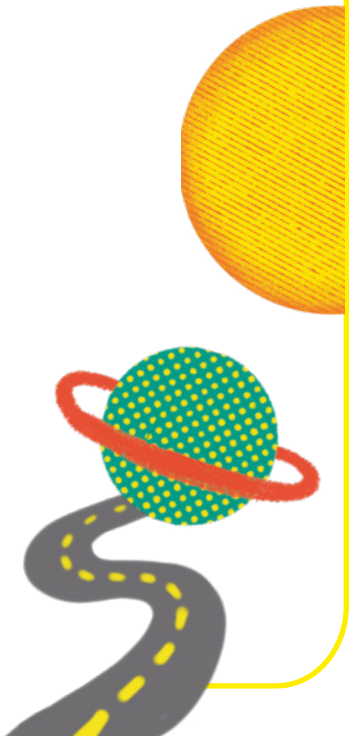


## HOW DO YOU THINK THE HUMAN BODY MIGHT CHANGE?

Think of our senses (Will we develop any new ones? Will we sharpen the senses we already have?), our level of physical activity (How would a completely sedentary body evolve? What about a hyper-exercised body?), and our habits (What effects might a habit that has been repeated for centuries have on the physical evolution of humans?). Draw the changes you imagine and note down any useful explanations.



What would you take with you for your future on another planet? Why?  
Draw and/or write your luggage here.



*I hope I haven't forgotten anything important.*



## INTERGALACTIC LUGGAGE

What would you take with you for your future on another planet?

You have been chosen to take part in a space mission to create a trial civilization in another galaxy, and you can only take one suitcase with you. You don't have much time to choose only the essentials for the best future possible. Your baggage limit is one cabin suitcase, and the weight limit is 10 kg.

## BEST FUTURE CANDIDATES, DEBATE



### HUMAN EQUALITY

In this future, human societies have come to the realisation that it is easier to achieve an equal society in all senses if everyone looks exactly the same. That is why all embryos undergo a standardising genetic modification to ensure that all human beings look identical.

### ANIMALS IN CHARGE

In this future, the vocal tract and brain of some animals on Earth have evolved in such a manner that they have developed the capacities of speech and complex thought. Humans are no longer the most intelligent animals on the planet, and gorillas, crows and elephants are in charge of most world governments.

### CHILDREN'S AND TEENAGERS' VOTE

In this future, all people over the age of 10 can vote and stand for election. The opinion and contributions of the underage population are taken into account in decisions at all levels: town councils, regional governments and country governments, as well as in key international summits.

### PREHISTORIC FUTURE

In this future, several centuries ago, leaders of all the countries in the world decided unanimously to start over. Much like a videogame, a decision was made to go back and start again, "to see if this time we do things better". In this future, we are still in prehistoric times, hunting and gathering our food.

**WHICH ONE OF THESE  
FUTURES WOULD YOU  
VOTE FOR? WHY?**



What qualifications or training should someone have if they wish to stand for democratic elections?

What personal qualities should someone have if they wish stand for democratic elections?

How could citizens prepare to exercise their vote in an informed and pondered manner?

In the future of our dreams, should people under the age of 18 be able to vote? Why? If you think they should, at what age do you think people should be able to vote? Why that age and not before?

In an ideal future, would all adults have the right to vote, or would there be some adults whose voting rights should be restricted or put on hold?

What would an animal have to develop in order for us to consider that they should have the right to vote?

Does the majority always make the best decisions? What if the majority makes a mistake?

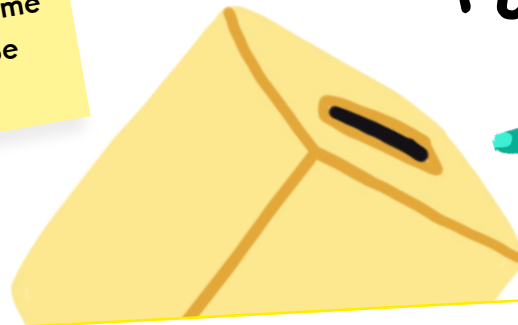
How much corruption can a democracy withstand?

Is it always fairer to decide on the basis of the majority's position or are there times when a minority's position should weigh more than the majority's?

Can you think of a better decision-making system than democracy?

What would the democracy of an ideal future look like?

## THE DEMOCRACY OF THE FUTURE



If people under 18 are not yet qualified to vote, what is it that makes them qualified to vote by the age of 18? What is it that they develop during this time? What if they never develop what they are meant to develop?

Can a society with an illiterate population be democratic?

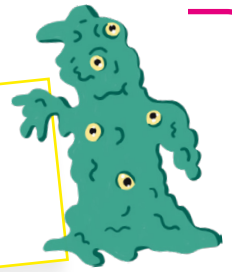
In a referendum, should elderly people have the right to decide the future of a country that will soon no longer be theirs?

Is it possible for there to be democracy in a society where some people have almost nothing at all and others have everything they want?



# WHAT WOULD YOU ASK A PERSON FROM 2984?

As a human being from 2984, this person is a true expert on the future. Imagine you could interview them. What would you ask them? Think of all the aspects of life that will have changed and ask them anything you feel curious about. There are already some questions sent in by people from the present like you. Making an effort not to repeat any questions that are already on the page, what other questions would you ask them?



In 2984, are you still living on Earth?

Are there aliens on Earth?

Have scientists managed to bring back dinosaurs?

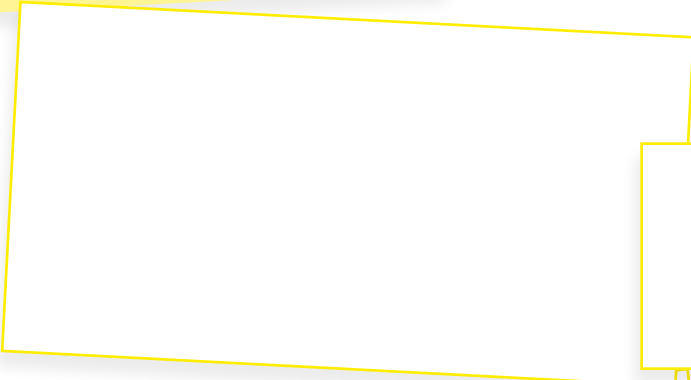
Are you happy?

What are your dreams?

Is there still poverty?

What are your hair and your skin like?

Do you have money?



**SEND THEM A POSTCARD!**

Go over all the questions from your interview to a human being from 2984 and choose one that you find most interesting, funniest, or most intriguing. Send it to them using the first postcard on the following page - you never know... you may get an answer one day!





Write your favourite question to send to the future here (see page 10).

POSTCARD TO



THE FUTURE

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Write your reply to the past here (see page 12).

POSTCARD



TO THE PAST

.....

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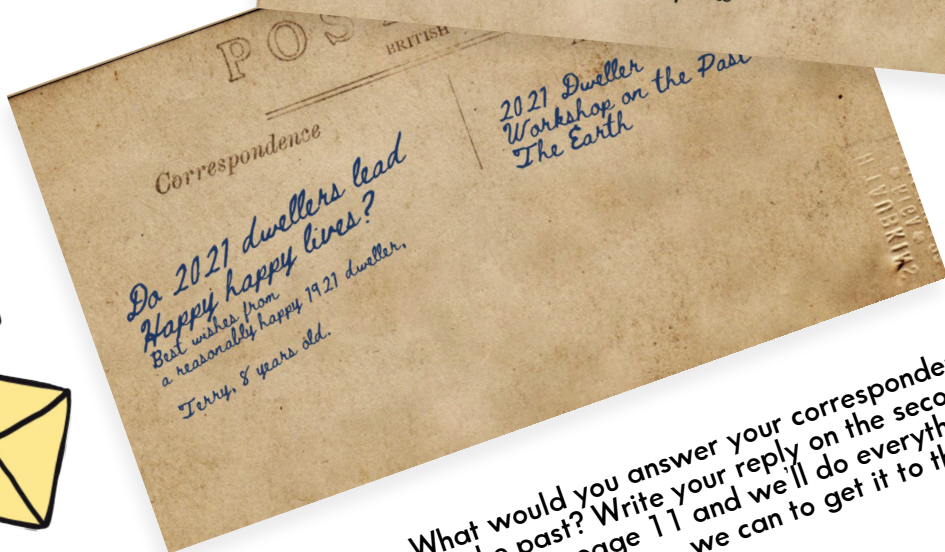
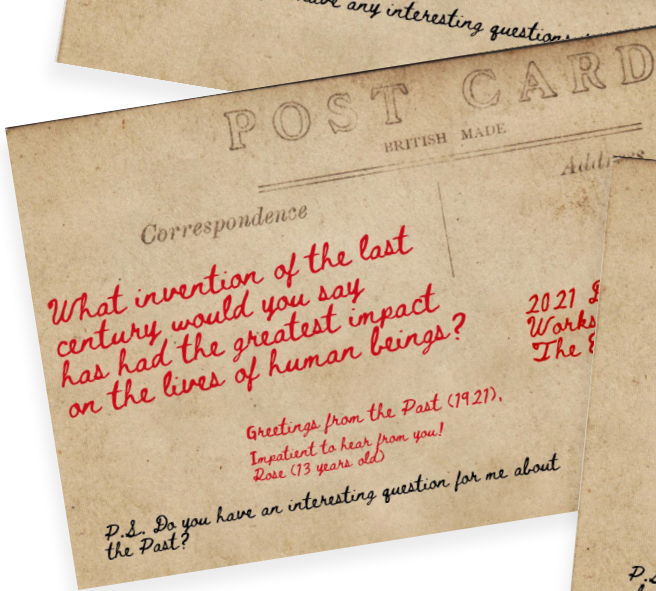
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Look at these postcards received all the way from 1921 for people of the future (such as yourself). Read them and choose your favourite.

# WHAT IF THIS IS THE FUTURE NOW?



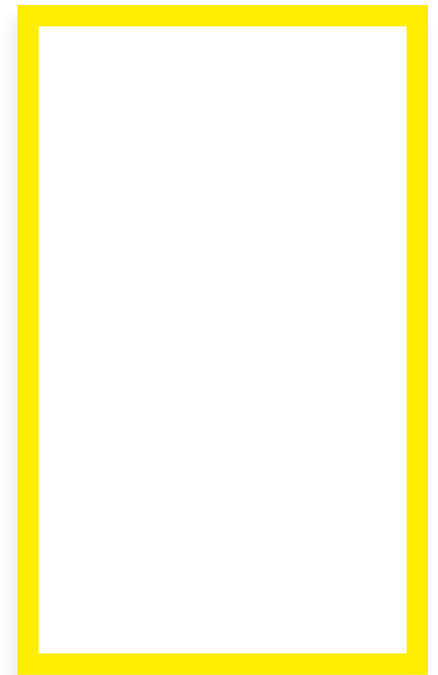
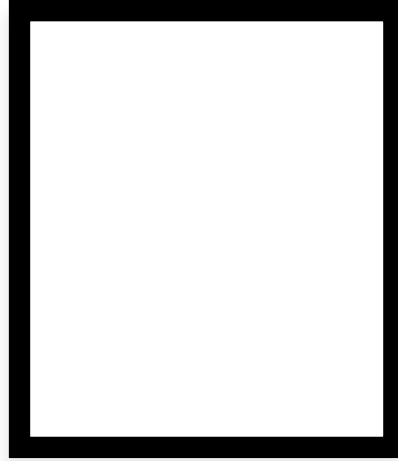
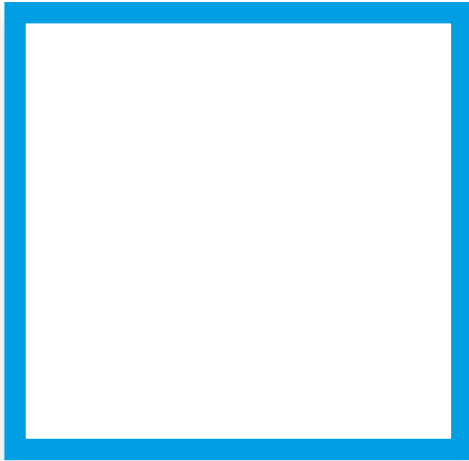
What would you answer your correspondent from the past? Write your reply on the second postcard on page 11 and we'll do everything we can to get it to them!

# WHAT FIVE THINGS WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO EXHIBIT IN A FUTURE 21ST CENTURY EARTH MUSEUM? 13

To help you choose, imagine a 25th century dweller, on Earth or a different planet. What 5 things would you choose to give them an idea of what day-to-day life was like on Earth in the 21st century? Draw each of your exhibits and note down next to it a brief explanation for people from the 25th century to understand what it is and why you have chosen it.



**WONDER  
PONDER**



I would have loved to see that with my own eyes.

But what did they used to do with that?



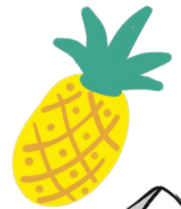




How do you imagine the houses of the future?



How do you imagine the parks of the future?



How do you imagine the food of the future?

How do you imagine the cities of the future?

How do you imagine the toys of the future?

How do you imagine the books of the future?



How do you imagine the clothes of the future?



How do you imagine the school of the future?

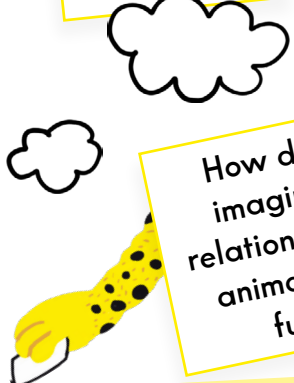
How do you imagine the landscapes of the future?

How do you imagine the people of the future?

How do you imagine the jobs of the future?



How will humans get along in the future?



How do you imagine our relationship with animals in the future?

How do you imagine the robots of the future?



How do you imagine the phones of the future?

What problems do you think will be solved in the future?

# QUESTIONS FOR IMAGINING THE FUTURE IN FULL DETAIL

What will your country's climate be like in the future?



How do you imagine the future of transport?

How do you imagine the music of the future?

How do you imagine the prisons of the future?



Will there be new laws in the future? What new laws do you imagine there might be?

What new rights do you think might be conquered in the future?



How do you imagine the family of the future?





# HOW DO YOU IMAGINE THE WORST FUTURE POSSIBLE?



As inspiration for your drawing, look at the previous page and think and talk about the questions. This will help you imagine the future in full detail. In your window looking onto the worst possible future, you can draw, write, or do a combination of both drawing and writing. When it's ready, invite other people to look out of your nightmare window. What do they think? Do they agree it is as terrifying as you think?



# HOW DO YOU IMAGINE THE BEST FUTURE POSSIBLE? 16



As inspiration for your drawing, look at the previous page and think and talk about the questions. This will help you imagine the future in full detail. In your window looking onto the best possible future, you can draw, write, or do a combination of both drawing and writing. When it's ready, invite other people to look out of your dreamy window. What do they think? Do they agree it is as marvellous as you think?



# A DAY IN 2984

## SHORT STORY COMPETITION

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

**1. ELIGIBILITY:** The Competition is aimed at anybody who wishes to take part, regardless of their age and nationality, in one of the following categories:

A- Children (aged 12 and under)

B- Teenagers (aged 13 to 17)

C- Adults (aged 18 and over)

Each participant may enter up to three stories. If a participant enters more than three, only the first three will be considered.

**2. ENTRY CRITERIA:** The topic for the stories entered is "A Day in 2984". This does not necessarily have to be the title of the story, although it may be.

The stories must be original and unpublished (in any format, including electronic, digital, or online), written in Spanish or English. If people writing in other languages wish to enter, they must provide, together with the original story, a translation of the story into Spanish or English.

The length of the stories must not exceed four A4 pages. They must be typed on one side only, with 2.5 cm. margins, 1.5 spacing, in Arial, 12 points. These rules do not apply to the Children's category, where handwritten stories will be accepted (with clear writing, in pen ink). In this case, the length must not exceed 6 pages (A4).

**3. SUBMISSION:** Printed submissions are accepted at:

Wonder Ponder  
C/ San Pedro 20  
(Librería La Sombra)  
28014 Madrid SPAIN

Digital submissions are accepted via email at [info@wonderponderonline.com](mailto:info@wonderponderonline.com), with the email subject WONDER PONDER "A DAY IN 2984" SHORT STORY COMPETITION, and attaching a file (preferably in PDF format) with the entry and the category it belongs to (as explained in point 1: A, B or C). Please also provide, on a separate page: name, age, email address, postal address and telephone number of the author or author's guardian.

**4. DEADLINE:** The deadline to take part in the competition is January 31st, 2022. Entries sent after this date shall not be taken into consideration for the prize.

**5. PRIZE:** The winning stories for each category will be published in a digital book by Wonder Ponder, of which the winners will receive two printed copies each.

**6. JURY:** The Members of the Jury will be the three members of Wonder Ponder's Editorial Committee and two other people, chosen by the Organisers of the Competition. The Jury's decision will be final and all or some of the prize categories may be declared void. The Jury's decision will be published on Wonder Ponder's website ([www.wonderponderonline.com](http://www.wonderponderonline.com)), in its Blog section, as well as informed directly to the winners and through social media.

**7. DATE OF ANNOUNCEMENT:** The winning stories will be announced on April 4th 2022, by means of a blog entry on the Wonder Ponder website ([www.wonderponderonline.com](http://www.wonderponderonline.com)), which will be shared on social media. The winners will also be notified by email.



# THE FUTURE IS WOW IS A FREE DOWNLOADABLE BOOKLET BY WONDER PONDER

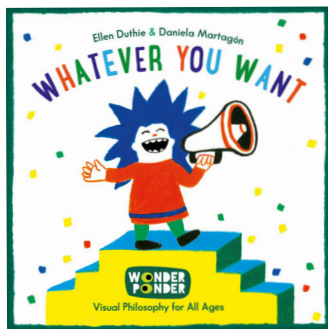
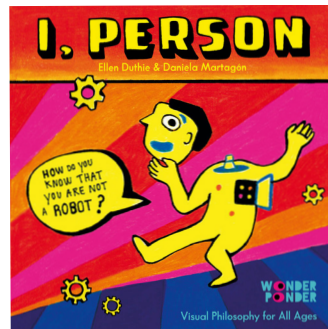
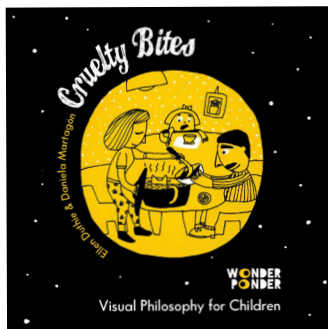
Have you tried out our other free resources?



Download them all here:



Do you know our Visual Philosophy for All Ages titles?



Wonder Ponder's Visual Philosophy for All Ages series introduces readers to philosophy's big questions playfully and appealingly. Wonder Ponder boxes are designed for children (and adults!) to look at, read and think about by themselves or with others, in educational, play or family settings.

Also available in Spanish and Catalan. *Cruelty Bites* is available in German (*Grausame Welt?* published by Mortiz Verlag) and Korean (published by Marubol). *I, Person* is available in Korean (Marubol). All four titles are available in Italian (Inter Logos).



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