

***Starman Jones* Lesson Plans**

By
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Introduction:

Starman Jones is the seventh of the juveniles Robert Heinlein wrote from the late forties through the early sixties. The series is widely regarded as the finest science fiction ever written for young people; many, including Grandmaster Jack Williamson, believe them to be the best science fiction Robert Heinlein ever wrote.

Starman Jones has the most Victorian feel of Heinlein's juveniles, as the main character is very Dickensian, as well as playing out the Horatio Alger theme of talent being the main means to lift yourself up by your own bootstraps. The one major issue I have found students (and other readers) objecting to is the dismal prediction of the nature of computers in the future, but some of this may be laid to the Max's talent being the key to survival. Students need to be told about the state of computers at the time of the novel's writing; few science fiction writers made any better predictions of their ultimate miniaturization and affordability.

We hope you find the following lesson plans helpful, and that you will choose *Starman Jones* or another Heinlein work to use in your classrooms. We would like to hear from you about your own experiences using Heinlein's works. Please email us!

Edition Used:

I have used the 1975 Del Rey edition, as it is the most widely available.

Date of Publication / Dedication:

Starman Jones was finished in February, 1953, and published for the Christmas trade that year.

Chapter Summaries / Discussion Notes:

Each chapter will be summarized, and pertinent details and issues explicated. Any of the details might be turned into extra credit questions, which require the student to do research on the internet or in a library. Heinlein often inserted historical, scientific, and literary references into his novels, as a way of gently urging the reader to explore these references. Vocabulary words which students may have difficulty with will be suggested, with particular attention paid to words Heinlein invented (which, unless we've adopted the word, won't be found in a dictionary).

I strongly urge that students learn vocabulary not by checking the dictionary, but by the following procedure: 1) say the word aloud (this begins to fix the word in long-term memory); 2) look for roots (Spanish speakers often have an advantage here, since the longer Latinate words in English often have a simple Spanish root, as in the word "facilitate"; 3) use context to make TWO guesses as to what the word means; 4) then, and only then, check the dictionary. Students need to be reminded to learn new vocabulary

words, because they will often choose to simply skip the word they don't know, or in running to the dictionary, will fail to permanently learn the new word as they only place the definition into short-term memory. I require my students to learn at least seven new words a week; in this, Heinlein is very helpful, because he actually used a more sophisticated vocabulary in his juveniles than in his adult fiction. If teachers do not encourage students to acquire the new vocabulary, students often have a hard time with Heinlein's juveniles for precisely that reason: they are more difficult than today's more controlled, simplistic vocabulary in most young adult novels.

CHAPTER ONE:

We begin with Max, a farm boy done with his chores....and now reading a book about xenobiology! Heinlein was a master at slipping in this sense of the future world, beginning with comfortable familiarity and slyly slipping in details that cast us into the far future.

Max is watching the ring road, a futuristic form of travel based on broadcast power and electromagnetism (scientifically, this is possible, and smaller forms of it have been developed for other uses). The *Tomahawk* arrives through the rings, sending out a sonic boom. Max is thrilled. He waits for the launching of the daily ship to the moon, which he can see on a clear day.

But then his mother calls for him (actually, his stepmother). He resents her interrupting his reading with her gossip and complaints, and the horrible shows she watches on "stereovision."

She is waiting for him, with Biff Montgomery, a muscular good-for-nothing. Maw has been dating him; Max starts to get angry. They've gotten married this day.

Montgomery wants to start drinking; Maw nudges him into carrying her across the threshold. Max follows, and begins to prepare the stove for dinner. Montgomery urges Max to drink with them; Max doesn't like it. Montgomery complains a bit, and expects his new bride to do better the next day. Max thinks he'll be disappointed, as Max is a better cook. They want dessert, but Maw ate it before.

They tell Max they've sold the farm. He is angry, and says Dad wouldn't have like it; they've been on that farm for four hundred years.

Montgomery doesn't want Max to know how much they got for the land. Max goes outside.

We find out Maw isn't his mother; she's his stepmother, and now he has a step-father. He goes back in to discover Montgomery going through their books, and Max protests that the books are his. Max is furious when Montgomery claims them (they were Max's blood uncle's books). Max calls Montgomery a thief; Montgomery wants to strap him.

Max runs out into the night. Later, Max slips into his bedroom secretly. Max ponders his future, and his promise to his father to take care of his stepmother. Max decides he no longer has that responsibility. Max decides to run away, and considers what to take with him. He looks for the money he has hidden away; it's not there (Maw must have found it). What he most wants is his uncle Chet's books.

He sneaks into the front room, and hears his stepmother and Montgomery in the bedroom. He sees there is a deadfall alarm of pots and pans on the front door. He gets

his uncle Chet's books, and starts to sneak back – then he remembers the library books, and crawls back to get it. He sneaks out, and takes off, worrying about Montgomery pursuing him.

CHAPTER TWO:

Max plans his escape through the train tunnel – a very dangerous business. Max thinks about the train schedules. He can tell time from looking at the stars (!). He decides to risk the tunnel. He gets through safely – then gets knocked down by a sonic boom, as a special train comes through. Max realizes he is deaf (temporarily) from the blast. Max keeps trekking. He realizes how hungry he is. His hearing comes back slowly.

He meets Sam, a hobo. Sam feeds Max. Sam recognizes Max has run away. Max tells him his story. Sam tells him Montgomery will probably come after him, since at least half the land is probably in his name. Sam asks to see Max's books; his uncle was an Astrogator, which is what Max wants to be. Max is hoping his uncle Chet registered him as his successor.

Max falls asleep – when he wakes up, Sam is gone, with the books. Max is angry, and takes off after him.

CHAPTER THREE:

Max comes to a truck-stop restaurant, looking to get a lift. One trucker named Red takes pity on Max, and buys him breakfast. He then offers him a “job” as co-driver to Earthport – even though Max doesn't drive. We learn how the fast freight trucks work. Max gets into the bunk and pretends to be asleep at every check point. Max mails the library book back (“filching a book was a sin”). They reach Earthport; Max helps Red unload, has breakfast, and Red gives him some money (Heinlein often has strangers handing out charity; he believed in helping others).

Max sees his first E.T.

Max does the country hick gawking routine.

Max gets help from a policeman to find the Astrogator's Hall. Max sees the *Asgard*, which his uncle Chet served in once. He reaches the Guild Hall.

CHAPTER FOUR:

Max goes to the Astrogator Guild headquarters. Mr. Hanson doesn't want to see him, but the receptionist sends Max up. Mr. Hanson sends him in to see the High Secretary, who sends out his fingerprints to get his identification certified. Max hopes to be accepted, but his uncle never made the nomination. Max explains it is because his uncle died suddenly, and never had a chance. The Secretary explains that another man came already claiming to be him; he takes out his ID card and Uncle Chet's books. Sam took off when they tried to take his fingerprints. Max tries to take the books; the Secretary explains that they are the Guild's property.

The Secretary does give Max Uncle Chet's deposited money, and even offers to have Max put into apprenticeship, at the Guild's expense, but not as an Astrogator. Max refuses, even though he knows he should take the opportunity.

Max leaves. Outside, he wonders what he will do now. He runs into Sam again. He starts to get mad, but a policeman comes up, and Sam has to talk his way out for Max. Max is confused; he's mad, but he also knows nobody else but Sam. Max tells him to forget about it. Sam asks him to come eat a meal, so they can talk. Max doesn't want to, as he is still angry – but then he remembers how Sam fed him mulligan stew, without any questions. Sam pawns his coat so they can eat; Max promises to pay him back.

Sam asks if he still wants to go into space; Max does. Sam tells him there are ways to finagle it – and wants to know if he can talk space patter.

CHAPTER FIVE:

Sam drills Max on spaceman lingo. Max realizes Sam has been spaceside. Sam asks Max if he wants to be on the *Asgard* heading out to the stars next week. Max does. Sam then asks if Max has any money; Max shows Sam what he got from the Guild, and Sam tells him to hide it before somebody kills him for it.

They talk about his uncle's books. Max reveals to Sam that he has them memorized (Max has perfect memory of what he reads). Sam tells Max he is going to sneak them on as experienced crewmen, with all the right documents – forged.

They go about the business. Max is aged a bit – hairline receded, wrinkles added. They get fake ids. Max is given a book on *Ship Economy* and he memorizes it overnight. Sam explains his cover, and how to behave.

They go for it.

CHAPTER SIX:

Max wakes Sam up; he has a hangover, and goes back to sleep.

They board the *Asgard*. Max keeps expecting to get caught, but everything goes fine. They get into space.

Sam finagles some food for them. Sam puts off questions about their last berth.

We learn the *Asgard* is carrying passengers and livestock. The Empire usually discourages terrestrial livestock on other planets, but some animals humans still need.

Max goes about his duties caring for the animals, and the ship's cats.

His boss is Mr. Giordano, "Mr. Gee." Heinlein explains the duties of the captain and the first officer. Mr. Gee leaves Max alone, once he sees Max knows his duties; Mr. Gee spends his time distilling vodka. Sam explains that a black market is essential to a healthy ship; it provides control.

Sam tells stories about other people, and Max suspects they are about Sam himself. Sam may have been a space marine.

Max says he'd like to continue in space. Sam tells him that sooner or later the paperwork is going to catch up, and they'll realize Max's papers are a fake (so are Sam's). Sam is planning on jumping ship on one of the colonies, Nova Terra. Sam sees it as a kind of utopia ("a comfortable looseness about it"). No guilds, moreover. Sam offers to take Max.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

Max isn't comfortable taking tips, but Sam tells him he should; then Mr. Gee expects his cut, so Max knows he needs to accept them. Sam explains to Max that when in Rome, shoot Roman candles. Max doesn't argue, but he thinks some things are always right, and some things are always wrong.

Max takes care of one extraterrestrial, a spider puppy. The spider puppy, Mr. Chips, can talk. Mr. Chips wants out. Max eventually lets him out, and Mr. Chips goes on his shoulder. Max tries to return him later, and has to end up rocking him to sleep while being walked. It becomes a habit.

Mr Chips owner is a teenage girl named Ellie. She comes to visit one day. They get off on a wrong foot, until Mr. Chips smoothes things over. Max finally asks where she's been. She explains they wouldn't let her down, because she was sick.

She comes back the next day, and sees that Max has a 3-d chess set. Max teaches Ellie how to play.

Ellie asks about the space transition coming up. Max tries to explain it to her, using a scarf.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

Max sleeps through the first transition.

Ellie explains the trouble she caused at school in order to get home.

Sam teases Max about Ellie, who is apparently rich.

Sam and Max plot their escape. Sam explains to Max that Ellie's father is an Ambassador.

Max doesn't like being thought of as a fortune hunter. He talks to Ellie about it, and she tries to finagle her way around it. Max finally convinced her that it is important for her to not get him in trouble.

Max gets summoned to the Captain. They are going to allow him to try for chartsman; the Astrogator knew his uncle.

CHAPTER NINE:

Max's life changes. The old crew aren't as warm to him; the new crew isn't quite sure to accept him.

Now he has to dress correctly, since passengers will see him. He also has to pay fines and fees for the transfer.

Now he works for Dr. Hendrix, the Astrogator, and alongside the other astrogation crew. Max goes through his first watch under Mr. Simes, who doesn't seem to like Max much. He finds shifts with Chief Kelly are happier, as Kelly wants him to learn everything. Max gets trained. Kelly discovers Max's gift. Dr. Hendrix tests his gift as well. Dr. Hendrix wants to see him later; while he's waiting, he runs into Ellie. She wants to know why he hasn't seen her, or Mr. Chips, or played chess. When she finds out he is on watches every four hours, she wants to go complain to the Captain; he begs her not to do so.

Max is drilled by Dr. Hendrix. He shows he has Shakespeare memorized too. Dr. Hendrix explains to him that character and duty matter more than this talent of his – and that he is not to fraternize with the passengers.

CHAPTER TEN:

Max hasn't seen Sam much, but he's been "prospering." Sam has become the master-at-arms, the ship's cop. Sam runs a tight ship, as he is a master fighter. Garson's Planet is an awful place, but there are Horst incongruencies nearby, making it the crossroads. Max goes down planetside with Sam. They go to a watering hole. A bargirl tries to talk Max into buying her a drink; he refuses, but offers a sandwich. They talk about Earth. Sam comes back, and says he has to go out for awhile, and to stay here and cause no trouble. Mr. Simes shows up and rags Max. Sam comes back. He runs Simes off.

They talk about their escape plans. Max wants to stay in space; now, Sam says, he has a chance, because he switched guilds. Only one paper has to get "lost" now. Sam offers to make arrangements for it. Max helps Sam carry back Sam's swag to the ship.

CHAPTER ELEVEN:

They head to the next planet.

Kelly puts Max on a watch in three, which gives him more sleep, and keeps him away from Mr. Simes. Dr. Hendrix shows the Captain Max's talent.

Hendrix wants to know Max's math abilities, and has him do a transition practice. Max's problem is lack of speed.

Max is then assigned Hendrix's watch. Hendrix makes a transition, and it is extraordinarily stressful.

They offer Max a spot in the Astrogator's Guild. But first, they ask him about his record. Max confesses that it's a phony – which they knew, and were testing him. Max tells them everything, while hiding Sam's role. Max says he had no other choice, if he wanted to space.

Hendrix says greatness and personal character don't always go hand in hand (Lord Nelson, Lincoln).

Hendrix was taught my Max's uncle; Hendrix is going to return the favor.

The Astrogators must all approve him; Max knows Mr. Simes will never agree. Hendrix says to leave that to him.

Max asks about how he will be punished; Hendrix says it probably won't be a problem.

Max wants to go tell Sam or Ellie.

CHAPTER TWELVE:

The Captain promotes him to Mr. Jones. He gets loaned a cap, with the apprentice marks on it. Max tries to get his own stuff, but Mr. Dumont gets him to realize that's not his place any more. They bring his things, and Dumont arranges to have

his uniform prepared. Max is going to have to eat with passengers now that he isn't crew any more.

Mr. Simes confronts him and tells him to mind his place; he only approved Max because the Astrogator and the Captain both said yes.

He goes to dinner, and Ellie congratulates him. She is dressed very sexy, and Max is embarrassed. That feeling continues when he realizes he has no table manners.

Max has to pay for a drink to toast his promotion – so far, he is going broke with this promotion.

Max is feeling his way with his old crew mates – they're for him, as long as he doesn't end up acting like Mr. Simes. Max catches a correction, and wonders if it was a trap for him.

Hendrix keeps drilling him for speed.

Max sees Sam; Sam tells him to stay in officer country. Max won't be jumping ship with Sam.

Max works the transition right up to twenty minutes before the jump.

Max is settling in. He gets to play chess with Ellie.

Max works the transition right up to ten minutes before the jump.

Ellie teaches Max how to dance.

Sam gets busted for setting up a roulette wheel. Sam won't get a chance to jump ship.

Sam tells Max not to worry; he had his next egg now, and he'll find a way off ship.

Max has leave on Halcyon. The natives like to eat humans, but they don't do it any more. They're safe, because it's bad juju to kill meat during the day.

Max dances and dines, and makes a wish on a shooting star. Max even thinks about kissing Ellie; she may not be out of his league now.

Max is called back to the ship; Dr. Hendrix is dead.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN:

Dr. Hendrix died of a heart attack.

The Captain decides to continue; he will stand a watch to make up for Hendrix.

They bury Dr. Hendrix in space.

Simes posts the new schedule; Max can see he intends to keep Max from learning, and that his chance of being an Astrogator vanished after Hendrix died.

Max assists the Captain through a transition – and realizes the Captain's mind isn't what it once was. He saved him through corrections twice.

The Captain changes Hendrix' method for the next transition.

During the transition, the Captain makes a mistake; Max tries to save him, but Simes agrees with the Captain. Simes catches it later, but only makes half the correction needed, because of the danger.

They come out in the wrong place.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN:

At the investigation, the Captain takes responsibility; Simes wants to blame Max. Simes passes orders to keep Max out of the control room; Max explains to Kelly the mistake the Captain and Simes made. Kelly explains that the Captain made a correction at the last moment – in the opposite direction.

Kelly is having them photograph the records, to make sure Max is protected. He gives the copies to Max. Kelly says they may never find their way back.

Max hides the copies in his room, behind the drawer.

Max stays in his room and worries.

Kelly shows up, and asks to see the copies; Simes has grabbed the originals. Kelly has Max keep a copy hidden.

There is a G-type star with a habitable planet nearby; they may need to settle there.

Max goes to dinner; the passengers grill him.

Max calms them down.

The Captain has an announcement read: there will be a scheduling delay. Max knows it's a whopper.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN:

Max hears that Sam has put down a mutiny.

Simes is screwing up; the Captain is falling apart.

Kelly arranges things so Max has to go back on watch. Simes isn't happy about it.

Max plays rules lawyer and forces Simes to recognize he is qualified to stand watch.

Max goes off duty; he runs into Sam. Sam has his post back. Sam approves of how Max handled Simes. Sam tells about breaking up the still, and he asks about the Captain. Nobody has seen the Captain since the incident.

They are heading to a planet to settle down.

Max sees Ellie. She is excited about the planet, which she wants to call Charity.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN:

The *Asgard* lands on Charity.

Max goes to the control room. The Captain appears, looking ancient.

They are brought to the Bifrost Lounge for an announcement.

The Captain speaks, fumblingly.

First Officer Walthers takes over. He explains how they will survive; he finally admits they are lost.

Mr. Daigler wants the crew to join them. Mr. Walther agrees.

Ellie wants to talk to Max; they meet in his room.

Mr. Daigler runs into them, and wants to ask Max some questions.

Max explains just how badly lost they are.

Mr. Daigler recommends Max and Ellie get married right away, by the Captain.

Max blushes and says he can't colonize, as one of the crew.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN:

They make a town, Charityville.

Mr. Daigler is elected mayor.

They are all feeling hopeful.

Charity seems like a wonderful place, with no dangers. There are centaurlike creatures, but nobody has gotten close to one yet. Some floating jellyfish like creatures are on the planet too.

Also, some creature called "peekers" nobody has seen up close yet.

Only Max seems unhappy.

Ellie is avoiding him. Max is upset that Daigler rushed things. Max really wants her now.

Max even goes so far as to ask the First Officer to revert him back to the crew, because of his trouble with Simes (really, it's so he can go colonize).

Max finally admits why; he is refused. Max is too important a resource.

Walthers wants to go up in orbit and continue searching.

Max goes looking for Sam.

He finds Ellie, and they make up.

They go for a walk. They spy on the centaurs – who capture them! Mr. Chips wants them to come back.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN:

Ellie doesn't panic; Max struggles to free them. The centaur investigates. They get tied better, and dragged off. Max convinces them they can't keep up. One of the floating jellyfish comes to stand guard (there seems to be a symbiotic relationship among the different species).

They get dragged away to another place, suffering the whole way. When they get tied up, Ellie finally has a good cry. Max thinks the ropes holding them are alive.

Mr. Chips finds them. They send a message back with Mr. Chips.

The centaurs come back, having captured most of the humans.

The centaurs feed and water them. Max is worried it's poisonous, but they eat and drink anyways.

Mr. Chips returns, still with the note. Ellie sends her away again.

They get moved again.

The centaurs are cannibals; they eat one of their old ones.

CHAPTER NINETEEN:

Their captivity continues. They build a three-d chess set. Max tells her she's smart. Ellie finally admits that she is better than he thinks; she was champion class back home. Max has annoyed her repeatedly.

Sam shows up in the night to rescue them.

In the escape, Ellie loses one shoe; Sam tells her to throw the other away. Later, she cuts her foot. The centaurs have come close to the ship; the humans have already abandoned the village, with casualties. The Captain is dead; so is Simes (Sam killed him when Simes pulled a gun on him).

They make a break for the ship; Sam tells them to keep running, and turns around to defend their retreat.

CHAPTER TWENTY:

Max and Ellie go up in the cage. They get stuck halfway up, and have to watch Sam die, as four other men try to help him. Mr. Walther asks to see him in his office.

Walther informs him that Max is now Captain.

Max is the only astrogator left in the chain of command.

Max finally agrees.

Walther explains that he never would have turned command over to Simes; Simes was unstable and incompetent.

Max learns all the astrogation books are gone.

Max dresses as the Captain, and meets with the survivors. They are going to try to return the exact same way they came. Anybody who doesn't want to take the risk will be dropped off on the other planet, Aphrodite, hot as it is. Captain Jones decides he doesn't like Mrs. Montefiore, and expels her from his dinner table in the future.

CHAPTER TWENTY ONE:

They bury Sam.

Max begins to plot his way back.

Mrs. Montefiore decides she wants off at Aphrodite. Max refuses.

Max sets up a cot in the control room and lives there.

Max works on the morale of the passengers, even dancing with Mrs. Mendoza and Ellie.

Max sees Mr. Walther privately, and makes sure he knows about the falsified papers. Max decides he's going to report it all, and face the music – with the crew's support.

Max gets them home (at one point, he feels like Dr. Hendrix is standing by his shoulder).

Max heads them for Nova Terra after dithering a minute.

CHAPTER TWENTY TWO:

We are back at the beginning, with Max laying on the grass watching for the train. Ellie has married Putzie instead of Max. Max is now an astrogator. He had to pay a huge fine. His farm is gone. The house is still standing, barely. He has no idea where Maw and her husband are. His half of the money paid most of the fine. He heads for Earthport.

Chapter Tests / Quizzes:

Personally, I do not care for many published textbook tests/quizzes, as I often find them to not fit what we have actually discussed in class, or what the students have themselves found in the text. I therefore tend to make up my own quizzes and tests, and I also rely heavily on questions about relationships, more than I do questions about specific details of the books. I teach very poor readers, and I am far more concerned that they understand what is happening between the characters, than I am in what color shirt a particular character is wearing, or some other pithy little detail that teachers dealing with very good readers might ask to make sure that their students have read. I check to make sure they've read by insisting that they answer the following kinds of questions using specific details (and by always asking a question about the end of the chapter), but I allow them to choose the details themselves to fit the question. I train them to answer questions this way by giving them several sample questions, then answering them on the board, using their input to craft a model response. I hope that the following questions are useful for quizzes and tests, as well as for classroom discussion. Again, I expect students to use specific details from the novel to answer these questions. If the extra credit questions seem appropriate for your class, you can add them to the quizzes, or use them as extra credit homework assignments.

CHAPTER ONE:

1. What kind of book is Max reading?
2. What does he watch the train do?
3. What surprise does his Maw have for him?
4. What is Max's true relationship with Maw?
5. What happens to the farm?
6. What does Max decide to do?
7. What does he insist on taking with him?
8. How does Max feel about library books?

CHAPTER TWO:

1. How does Max plan his escape?
2. What are all the trains named after?
3. What almost kills Max?

4. What is Sam like?
5. What happens to Max's books?

CHAPTER THREE:

1. How does Red help Max?
2. Where does Max go once he reaches Earthport?

CHAPTER FOUR:

1. Where does Max go first?
2. What has Sam tried to do?
3. What did his Uncle Chet fail to do?
4. What does the Secretary take from Max?
5. What does the Secretary give Max?
6. What does the Secretary offer Max, although he is refused?
7. What happens with the policeman?
8. What happens with Sam?

CHAPTER FIVE:

1. Explain Sam's plot.
2. What unusual talent does Max have?

CHAPTER SIX:

1. What kinds of duties does Max have?
2. What kind of a boss is Mr. Gee?
3. What is the future problem with Max's paperwork?
4. What is Sam's plan?

CHAPTER SEVEN:

1. What does Mr. Gee expect from Max's tips?
2. What does Sam argue about customs?
3. How does Max feel about that argument?
4. Who is Mr. Chips?
5. Who is Eldreth?

CHAPTER EIGHT:

1. What trouble does Ellie cause for Max?
2. What new opportunity does Max get?

CHAPTER NINE:

1. What problems come with his promotion?
2. What is Mr. Simes like?
3. What is Mr. Kelly like?
4. What happens when they discover Max's gift?
5. What does Dr. Hendrix tell Max?

CHAPTER TEN:

1. What happens in the bar?
2. What new plan does Sam offer for Max's future?

CHAPTER ELEVEN:

1. What is Max's only problem running the transition approach?
2. What do they offer Max?
3. How do they uncover the truth?

CHAPTER TWELVE:

1. How does life change for Max?

2. Why is he embarrassed at dinner?
3. What is Hendrix teaching Max?
4. What happens to Sam?
5. What are the natives on Halcyon like?
6. What does Max want to do with Ellie?
7. What happened to Dr. Hendrix?

CHAPTER THIRTEEN:

1. What killed Dr. Hendrix?
2. What does the Captain do wrong?
3. What does Simes do wrong?
4. What happens to the *Asgard* at the end of the chapter?

CHAPTER FOURTEEN:

1. How is Simes taking it out on Max?
2. What does Kelly prepare that will help Max?
3. How does Simes try to cover his mistake?
4. What do the passengers feel?
5. What lie is told to them?

CHAPTER FIFTEEN:

1. What does Max force Simes to do?
2. What has happened to Sam?
3. What does Ellie decide to call the planet they are heading towards?

CHAPTER SIXTEEN:

1. What is the Captain like now?

2. What are their plans on Charity?
3. Just how lost are they?
4. What does Mr. Daigler recommend for Max and Ellie?

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN:

1. What does Max ask Mr. Walthers for?
2. What is the answer?
3. What happens between Max and Ellie?
4. What happens with the centaurs?

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN:

1. Describe their captivity.
2. What do they learn about the natives?

CHAPTER NINETEEN:

1. Describe the escape, in detail.
2. What happened to the Captain?
3. What happened to Simes?
4. What happened to Sam?

CHAPTER TWENTY:

1. What surprise awaits Max?
2. What does Walther explain about Simes?
3. Why is Max so invaluable now?
4. What plan does Max pursue?

CHAPTER TWENTY ONE:

1. How does Max handle being Captain?

2. How does he keep up the morale of the passengers?
3. What does he decide to do when he gets home, following the advice of Walther?
4. Is Max successful at astrogation?
5. What supernatural help does he feel he gets?
6. Where do they head at the end of the chapter?

CHAPTER TWENTY TWO:

1. What is Max watching?
2. What happened to Ellie?
3. What happened to Maw?
4. How did Max resolve his problems with the Guild?
5. What is his life like now?

Extra Credit Questions:

1. What is a good Samaritan?
2. Who is Blind Tom?

Vocabulary Words (these are all words I've had students ask me about):

- p. 24: groggily; scurrying; concluded; watershed
p. 44: lofty
p. 45: anarchy; entrusting; swarming; quirk
p. 47: peevishly; cynicism
p. 56: incarceration; embossed
p. 57: bonnet
p. 59: unceremonious; deception; taut
p. 60: tyro
p. 61: rapport
p. 62: domains
p. 63: satrap
p. 65: habitual; cynical
p. 80: anomalies; indeterminacy
p. 81: idler; reveille; fuming; displacement
p. 83: trifle; finesse; remittance
p. 88: disputed; affront

p. 90: vernier; stereograph (other words on this page are future tech)
p. 91: elation
p. 100: prospering
p. 109: wangle
p. 114: anomaly
p. 118: chicanery
p. 136: titular
p. 155: deuce; revered
p. 228: prudence
p. 237: pulsation; indoctrination; foibles; ramifications
p. 243: belligerent; prig
p. 244: incorrigible

Essay Questions and Projects:

1. Research the guild in medieval European history. What was the purpose of the guilds? What kinds of rules did they have? Why did they have those rules? Compare and contrast that historical example with the Astrogators' Guild in this novel. What allows that kind of Guild to persist in the future?
2. In chapter 7, Sam argues that customs are variable, and you should go along to get along. Max doesn't argue back, but he thinks some things are always wrong, and some things are always right. Consider this argument between moral relativism and moral certitude. Take up each side of the argument, and try to prove it right; then, in your conclusion, choose the one you disagree with and try to prove it wrong, including your own ideas about the subject.
3. The only way in which *Starman Jones* has aged badly has to do with computers. Research the state of computers in the fifties, and present your findings to help others understand why the plot made sense then.