

In the Year 2525

By Richard Stull

Vacations in the year 2525 are not what they used to be. In the past, people packed a car and drove for hours or days. Now people can travel millions of miles without taking a step. They can also travel far back in time.

The Ortiz family wanted to take such a vacation. The first step was a visit to the office of Virtual Vacations. There, they talked with a travel agent named Jill.

"We want to have lots of fun," said Mr. Ortiz.

"We also want to see strange sights," said Mrs. Ortiz.

"I have the perfect destination for you," said Jill. "You're going to Volcano Vacationland!"

Jill explained that Volcano Vacationland was in the distant past. She said that it had pools heated by hot lava and lots of rides for the kids. "You'll also see active volcanoes and dinosaurs," she said. "Of course, the trip is completely safe."

Jill led the Ortizes into the Virtual Vacation Room. In this room, the setting and feel of a distant place is produced by computers. The computers can also create settings from long ago.

People on Virtual Vacation feel as if they are really visiting a place. They can do all the things that they would do if they were really there. In fact, they never leave the Virtual Room Vacation.

"Just yell when you want to come home," said Jill. "I'll be at the controls."

Suddenly, the Ortizes were staring at a strange being with two heads. It was sleeping on a couch. "This isn't very exciting," said Mrs. Ortiz. "I don't see any volcanoes."

Like their parents, the Ortiz children were not impressed by the snoring being with two heads. "Where are all the fun rides?" they asked.

The Ortizes could see that they were not at Volcano Vacationland. They yelled for Jill to bring them back.

"I must have pushed the wrong button," admitted Jill. "I think I sent you to the planet Frufree by mistake. "The Ortizes decided to try again.

Soon they heard what sounded like gunfire. Suddenly, a soldier was shouting at them. "This can't be right," said Mr. Ortiz. "It looks more like the American Revolution."

They yelled again for Jill to bring them back. "I'm sorry," she said. "I must have pushed the buttons for battle in 1781."

"I promise to get it right this time," said Jill. She carefully pushed the buttons. The Ortizes huddled together in suspense. Each of them wondered what would happen this time. Would they meet another weird being? Would they find themselves in the middle of a battle? Then a strange landscape came into view.

The Ortizes saw volcanoes. They saw fun rides. They saw swimming pools surrounded by hot lava. They even seemed to be riding in a car.

"Hurray!" yelled the Ortizes. "We're finally at Volcano Vacationland."

"It seems that Jill has pushed the right buttons," said Mrs. Ortiz.

Of course, the Ortizes were just standing in the Virtual Vacation Room. They had forgotten that. They were on their fun vacation at last.

I. Read and answer the following questions.

1. As the story begins, what is the Ortiz family doing?
2. Why does Jill think that Volcano Vacationland would be a good destination for the Ortiz family?
3. What happens first to the Ortizes in the Virtual Vacation Room?
4. How would you describe Jill?
5. Where does the end of the story take place?
6. What settings are there in the story?
7. If you could go on a Virtual Vacation, where would you go? Why?

II. Use the chart below to record information about the story.

Hints:

Characters: people in the story.

Setting: place and time

Conflict: what is the problem in the story.

Events: what happens in the story?

Resolution: how does the story end?

Characters:	Setting:
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Conflict:

Events: 1.

2.

3.

Resolution: