

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

THESE QUESTIONS ARE DESIGNED TO HELP GUIDE DISCUSSION IN READING GROUPS, BUT CAN ALSO BE OF VALUE TO THE INDIVIDUAL READER.

There are no right or wrong answers; only your opinions. In addition, there is a chapter by chapter summary of the book with further questions available to download as a Word document from the website.

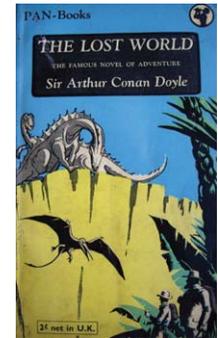
Conan Doyle dedicates the novel 'To the boy who's half a man/Or the man who's half a boy'. To what extent do you think this is a boy's book?

Critic Michael Coren says the 'other characters are mere shadows in comparison' to Challenger. Do you agree with this? Do you think this matters in an adventure book of this type? Why?

Do you think we are supposed to approve of Gladys' wish to be the wife of a hero? Why? What views of marriage and of women does Conan Doyle present in the book?

How does Conan Doyle present scientists and science in this book? How are men of science, like the professors, contrasted with men of action, like Lord John Roxton?

Covers of *The Lost World*, various editions (c 1950-1960) (private collection).



Conan Doyle refers to non-white races in a language that was common at the time. How does it feel to read this type of language today? How are the different races – the ape-men, Indians, Africans, "half-breeds" and Europeans – compared?

What effect does it have telling a large part of the story in the form of reports sent back to the newspaper by Malone? What is the effect of having the account of the dramatic events at the Zoological Society near the end of the book as a newspaper article rather than as first-person narrative? Why do you think Conan Doyle uses these devices?

What do you think Conan Doyle's attitude is to war and conquest from his description of the battle with the ape-men and its aftermath? How do you think we are supposed to respond to the annihilation of the ape-men?

How have the travellers each become 'a better and deeper man' as a result of their journey to the lost world?

What impact do you think the book had on readers of the time, and how might this compare with its impact on modern readers?

Now you have finished the book, would you recommend it to other readers? Why?