

## TimeTilter

**Sonia Ellis**

Tumblehome Learning (Jan 1, 2018)

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*TimeTilter breathes new life into standard genre elements.*

Sonia Ellis's *TimeTilter* is an engaging, character-driven young adult adventure that sets a group of discarded teens against a ruthless corporation with shocking ramifications.

Fifteen-year-old Singer struggles with a disability and with finding a place in her perfectionist family. When her beloved dog, Dublin, is given away, Singer decides to steal him back from his new owner. Disaster strikes. She finds herself caught up with a mysterious company, Collusia, whose newest endeavor is a gaming experience fueled by perception-altering drugs. Trapped in a world where time is experienced at a slower rate, Singer must band together with other troubled youths to survive.

It's clear from the start that Collusia, the TimeTilter, and the drug are nefarious elements in a larger scheme. However, the way the mysteries unfold keeps the tension taut throughout.

The drugs prove to be a fascinating aspect of the text, giving it a gamer feel. They cause every actor to experience time dilation in the same way—unless they lose line of sight. The only way back onto the same “time-dilation path” is to physically interact. Each character experiences the effects in a different manner related to their vision, and in nearly superhuman ways. The revelation of the drug's true purpose is fascinating; it holds great promise for the future of the series.

Elements of the narrative connect to the real world. Embedded within the text, usually after key moments, are links with passwords to access actual websites. This interactive feature allows audiences to dig deeper into the mythology of the novel and to feel more connected to its characters. Key documents and notes add another touch of authenticity, particularly with their unique formatting and fonts.

While characterization is decent, characters tend to share similar voices. This results in somewhat awkward conversations and muddled speeches. It is sometimes difficult to connect the characters to their words.

*TimeTilter* breathes new life into standard genre elements. The initial premise lures readers in, but it is the intense climax that throws the door open to a whole new conflict.

JOHN M. MURRAY (Children's SIP 2017)

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