

PIONEERS  
CONTAINING

A man with a mustache, wearing a dark military uniform with epaulettes, sits behind a large wooden desk in a dimly lit room. The room has large windows with vertical blinds in the background. The desk is cluttered with papers and a lamp is visible on the left. The entire scene is framed within a dark, rounded rectangle.

**EPISODE 1:  
KILLING HITLER  
FT LUKE FROM  
LUKE'S ENGLISH  
PODCAST**

A TIME TRAVELLING  
STORY FOR  
ENGLISH LEARNERS

# Pioneers Of The Continuum

## Episode 1 - Killing Hitler

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### Transcript

[00:00:04] Pioneers of the Continuum.

[00:00:06] A story for English learners.

[00:00:09] Episode one, "Killing Hitler", guest starring Luke Thompson from Luke's English Podcast.

[00:00:17] You can find the interactive transcript, subtitles and vocabulary for this episode for free at [leonardoenglish.com](http://leonardoenglish.com)

[00:00:25] The machine that they put me in was nothing much to look at. It was a tiny metal box. So tiny, in fact, that I needed to curl up into the foetal position just to fit inside it, you know, like I was in my mother's womb.

[00:00:43] Still, I couldn't complain. After all, I was the one who had designed this tiny metal box. If it was any bigger, it could cause problems on... the other side.

[00:00:56] As the small team of scientists, my friends, made the final preparations, I allowed my mind to wander.

[00:01:03] For the past few weeks, getting to the lab every day had been harder and harder. At first, there were only a few protesters, but the number grew and grew into the hundreds until it was hard just to drive through the crowd.

[00:01:17] I chuckled as I recalled some of their protest signs. "NO TO TIME EXPERIMENTS". "BAN QETT NOW!". "MAN MUST NOT PLAY GOD". Luckily, they had no idea what we were up to today, or they would probably burn the place to the ground!

[00:01:34] "Almost ready," said Marcie, who had taken the role of our lead engineer.

[00:01:40] I nodded.

[00:01:41] I had spent the last two months brushing up on my German and studying the Fuhrer's movements in 1939.

[00:01:50] Today would be the first time that a human travelled through time. I was travelling back 100 years to 1939.

[00:01:58] My mission? I was going to kill Adolf Hitler.

[00:02:04] It was indescribable. In the blink of an eye, one world was gone and another was in its place.

[00:02:14] It was cold.

[00:02:16] Damp.

[00:02:16] The box was gone. I uncurled from the foetal position and looked around.

[00:02:23] On the walls were expensive cognac, bordeaux, burgundy and champagne. I was in a wine cellar, the wine cellar of the Kehlsteinhaus - the Eagle's Nest - Hitler's favourite retreat.

[00:02:38] It had worked! This was the exact location we had programmed into the machine.

[00:02:44] Hitler was probably upstairs somewhere, plotting with his generals or doing whatever megalomaniac dictators do to relax.

[00:02:53] I had one hour to find him and kill him, before I had to return.

[00:02:58] As I tell this story, I know what you might be thinking. If I kill Hitler, I'll change the entire course of history and I'll return to a completely different world. An event of that magnitude would affect everything... maybe my parents would never meet and I would never be born! Would killing Hitler kill me, too?

[00:03:20] Quantum Entanglement Through Time, or QETT as we call it, doesn't work that way.

[00:03:26] It allows us to travel back through time, but to a parallel universe. I will kill Adolf Hitler here in this timeline and free this world from tyranny. But when I return home, everything will still be the same.

[00:03:42] I can't change the past in my timeline, but I can change it in a different timeline.

[00:03:47] See? It's so nice and neat. There are no moral dilemmas - although the protesters won't believe it - no consequences to me, my friends and my world.

[00:03:58] But this world... the world I was travelling to, will be spared the horrors of World War Two.

[00:04:05] The trick, you see, is to travel to a timeline which has very little variation from our own. After all, there's no point travelling to a timeline where Hitler never existed. Or where he was the good guy! I mean, it would be interesting, but I was here for a purpose.

[00:04:23] I smoothed down my uniform and checked my pistol. Everything was in order.

[00:04:29] I carefully opened the cellar door and peeped out. The corridor was empty.

[00:04:35] According to my research, the Fuhrer should be here with Eva Braun - his lover - some generals and just a couple of guards.

[00:04:44] I tiptoed further along the corridor and something interesting caught my eye.

[00:04:49] It was a banner with a swastika on it, the sign of the Nazi party. But instead of the red background that I was familiar with, the swastika was set against a GREEN background.

[00:05:01] YES! This was the first proof that I was indeed in a parallel timeline. Little things would be different. I could rest assured that killing Hitler here wouldn't have any nasty consequences in my own timeline when I returned.

[00:05:17] I snapped a picture of the banner using the device embedded in my arm, and moved on.

[00:05:23] I found a window looking outside. Four guards in military uniform were chatting and smoking beside the entrance. They wore green swastikas and their helmets were an odd shape, different from the photos I had seen.

[00:05:37] This was good...very good. Hitler had posted the guards at the entrance so that he could be alone inside with his family. Now to find him... and put a bullet in his head!

[00:05:50] I came to a large room with five people sitting in it, facing away from me, towards the fireplace and chatting animatedly. One, I recognised as Eva Braun, Hitler's lover. The others were surely family members. Hitler was not there.

[00:06:06] Again, this was fantastic news! Hitler must be upstairs in his study, by himself! That meant that I could take my time, maybe speak with him a little bit first, before dispatching him, before putting a bullet in his brain.

[00:06:22] I sneaked slowly up the spiral staircase, removing my pistol from its holster and finally arriving at a closed door at the top. From inside the room, I heard a cough but no other sound.

[00:06:35] This was it. Showtime! I took a deep breath and gently opened the door.

[00:06:43] There he was! There was my man! Adolf Hitler sat behind a huge wooden desk, reviewing paperwork. His black hair was parted harshly to one side in his trademark style.

[00:06:57] The little moustache that was so famous was gone. In its place was a huge, bushy one, making him look more like an American Civil War general than a 20th century dictator!

[00:07:10] Through the open window behind him lay the mountains and fresh air of southeast Germany.

[00:07:16] Hitler looked up and saw me. His eyes narrowed and he rose to his feet.

[00:07:22] “Shhh!,” I said, showing him my pistol. I motioned for him to sit down, and he did so.

[00:07:30] “Wer bist du?” he asked with obvious contempt.

[00:07:34] Speaking in German, I told him my name: Winston.

[00:07:38] My father was a big fan of Winston Churchill and he named me after him. It’s how I became so interested in this historical period.

[00:07:47] “Winston?” Hitler scowled. “Are you British? What do you want? How did you get in here?”

[00:07:54] “I’m from the future”, I told him. “100 years in the future. I travelled back in time to get here.”

[00:08:00] He stared at me blankly. It was hardly surprising that he didn’t believe me. I needed to find a way of convincing him.

[00:08:07] “Watch this,” I said. I pressed a button on my left arm to reveal the embedded screen. I pulled up the calendar app and scrolled to today’s date. I mean, the date when I left. August the 20th, 2039.

[00:08:22] Hitler’s eyes widened as he saw the device. I knew that he was interested in magic and the supernatural. He probably thought it was magic, some sort of sorcery from the future! I was sure he believed me.

[00:08:35] “ Why are you here?”

[00:08:37] I told him the truth, that I had come to kill him.

[00:08:41] To my surprise, he didn’t flinch, or reach for the pistol on his desk; he didn’t look scared or nervous at all.

[00:08:49] “If you have come to kill me, then why haven’t you done it yet? You don’t have long; my guards come to check on me every 15 minutes.”

[00:08:57] I pointed my pistol directly at Hitler’s forehead.

[00:09:01] “I have time. A little time,” I said.

[00:09:05] And continued.

[00:09:07] “You’re about to invade Poland. When you do, it will trigger a second great war. We call it World War 2. Millions upon millions of people will die. Millions of Jews will be put in camps and executed, women and children too. New weapons will be invented - atomic bombs that can kill hundreds of thousands in a few seconds.

[00:09:28] “And it will all be for nothing because you’ll lose this war. Germany will be destroyed and your enemies will divide the country into two. The name ‘Hitler’ will become hated throughout the world. 100 years from now, people will call each other ‘nazi’ or ‘hitler’ as an insult.”

[00:09:46] Hitler was listening intently. Finally, he spoke.

[00:09:51] “ You’re lying. Why would you travel back in time to kill me... if I LOST? That is the part that I don’t believe. No, I don’t think I will lose this war. I think I will WIN. And THAT is what you have come back to change. You’re an enemy of the Third Reich. That is all.”

[00:10:10] I shook my head and accessed a newspaper from 1945 on my device.

[00:10:15] I tapped the screen and projected it onto the wall. Another tap and it was translated into German. The headline read “Hitler Dead”, in capital letters, and that the Allies had defeated Germany and the war in Europe was over.

[00:10:32] Hitler read it disbelievingly. I had failed to convince him. “Go ahead. Shoot!” he dared me.

[00:10:40] I pointed the gun again at his face. Beads of sweat formed on my forehead. It’s not an easy thing to kill a man, even Hitler; I hadn’t quite realised this until now.

[00:10:52] My hand was shaking. I couldn’t do it. I decided to give him a way out.

[00:10:58] “It doesn’t have to be this way,” I said. “You can change. Give me your word that you won’t invade Poland and I won’t shoot you.”

[00:11:05] Hitler shook his head. “What is your world like, this 2039? I think it must be quite nice. You look healthy. You’ve invented time travel. You obviously have these advanced technologies.”

[00:11:22] I nodded as he spoke these words.

[00:11:24] “Then, why do you wish to change the past? Win or lose, war or no war, how do you know that a different future would be better? How can you be sure? Perhaps in the final analysis, killing me is not the solution you think it is.”

[00:11:39] We stared at each other across the table for a long time. He was thinking hard. I could see that I'd planted a seed of doubt in his mind.

[00:11:48] The thing was...he had also planted a seed of doubt in mine.

[00:11:53] Could a future with no Hitler be worse? World War Two had inspired nations to seek peace in order to never again face its atrocities.

[00:12:03] With no Hitler, would that still happen?

[00:12:06] Two men. Two seeds.

[00:12:09] Time was running out.

[00:12:11] I pulled the trigger.

[00:12:14] You see, I didn't pull the trigger on my gun, but on my chronotrigger, my time travel device.

[00:12:23] When I pressed it, I disappeared immediately from 1939, and was shot back to the future, back to 2039, back to today.

[00:12:34] Did Hitler, in that timeline, start World War Two? Or was he a reformed person after his encounter with a mysterious man who claimed to be from the future?

[00:12:45] There's no way to know. Events in that timeline have no effect on this one.

[00:12:51] And using QETT - Quantum Entanglement Through Time - the choice of timeline is somewhat random. It's extremely unlikely that anyone could ever return to the same one and find out what happened.

[00:13:05] It's a strange situation, and I don't blame you if you're struggling to wrap your head around it.

[00:13:10] But the strangeness, and indeed, my story, was just beginning.

[00:13:15] After all, this was only the first of the missions that we would undertake.

[00:13:19] And next time, we would be travelling even further back into the past.

[00:13:26] Pioneers of The Continuum was a Leonardo English production.

[00:13:33] The story was written by Emile Dodds and me, Alastair Budge.

[00:13:39] Winston was played by Luke Thompson from Luke's English Podcast.

[00:13:44] Make sure to subscribe and follow the podcast to get the next episode straight into your favourite podcast app.

## Language spotlight

### Idiomatic Expression: "**Put a bullet in his head**"

- Meaning: This phrase is a violent idiom used to describe killing someone by shooting them in the head. It's quite graphic and should be used with care as it can be disturbing to some listeners.
- Synonyms: "Shoot someone dead", "Take someone out"
- Antonyms: "Spare someone's life", "Let someone live"
- Correct Use:
  1. "The assassin was paid to **put a bullet in his head**."
  2. "The undercover agent was ordered to **put a bullet in the head** of the drug lord."
- Incorrect Use:
  1. "He decided to **put a bullet in his head** of his problems." (Incorrect because the phrase is used to describe solving problems which is inappropriate and violent.)
  2. "The task was difficult, so they decided to **put a bullet in its head**." (Incorrect because the phrase is used figuratively for a non-living entity which does not make sense.)

### Idiomatic Expression: "**Brushing up on**"

- Meaning: To review or practice something in order to refresh one's memory or improve one's skills.

- Synonyms: "Revise", "Refresh", "Polish up"
- Antonyms: "Ignore", "Neglect"
- Correct Use:
  1. "Before the final exam, he spent a lot of time **brushing up on** his maths skills."
  2. "She was **brushing up on** her Italian before her trip to Rome."
- Incorrect Use:
  1. "I'm **brushing up on** my dinner." (Incorrect because the phrase is used for an activity that doesn't involve learning or improving a skill.)
  2. "He was **brushing up on** sleep." (Incorrect because it's used for a natural process, not an ability or knowledge.)

Idiomatic Expression: "**Wrap your head around**"

- Meaning: To understand or comprehend something that is challenging or confusing.
- Synonyms: "Understand", "Comprehend", "Grasp"
- Antonyms: "Misunderstand", "Confuse"
- Correct Use:
  1. "It took me a while to **wrap my head around** the complex physics concept."
  2. "She had trouble **wrapping her head around** the new software."
- Incorrect Use:

1. "I'm trying to **wrap my head around** my sandwich." (Incorrect because it's used for a physical object, not an idea or concept.)
2. "He's **wrapping his head around** the basketball game." (Incorrect because it's used for a physical event, not an abstract idea or concept.)

Idiomatic Expression: "**Plant a seed of doubt**"

1. Meaning: To cause someone to start questioning or feeling uncertain about something.
2. Synonyms: "Instill doubt", "Raise doubts"
3. Antonyms: "Reassure", "Affirm"
4. Correct Use:
  - a. "His comments started to **plant a seed of doubt** in her mind about the project."
  - b. "The competitor's impressive performance **planted a seed of doubt** in the athlete's mind."
5. Incorrect Use:
  - a. "I will **plant a seed of doubt** in the garden." (Incorrect because it's used literally for planting, not for instilling doubt or uncertainty.)
  - b. "He **planted a seed of doubt** on his mind." (Incorrect preposition use - it should be 'in' not 'on'.)

## Quiz

### Listening comprehension

1. Where does Winston end up after travelling through time?
  - a. In a theatre
  - b. In a wine cellar
  - c. In a hotel room
  - d. In a library
2. How does Quantum Entanglement Through Time (QETT) work?
  - a. It allows you to stop time.
  - b. It allows you to teleport to another location.
  - c. It allows you to travel back in time to a parallel universe.
  - d. It allows you to predict the future.
3. Why does Winston take a picture of the banner with the green swastika?
  - a. To prove to protestors that he was successful in killing Hitler.
  - b. To sell the picture to a museum.
  - c. To prove that he was in a parallel timeline.
  - d. To give to the guards as a souvenir.

### True or false

4. QETT allows the time travellers to change the past in their own timeline.

- a. True
  - b. False
5. Winston saw Eva Braun in the first room he searched.
- a. True
  - b. False
6. Winston killed Hitler as soon as he saw him.
- a. True
  - b. False

### Fill in the blanks

7. If I kill Hitler, I'll change the entire course of history and I'll return to a completely different world. An event of that \_\_\_\_\_ would affect everything... maybe my parents would never meet and I would never be born! Would killing Hitler kill me, too?
8. Quantum Entanglement Through Time, or QETT as we call it, doesn't work that way. It allows us to travel back through time, but to a \_\_\_\_\_ universe.
9. Hitler's eyes widened as he saw the device. I knew that he was interested in magic and the \_\_\_\_\_. He probably thought it was magic, some sort of sorcery from the future! I was sure he believed me.

## Vocabulary practice

10. What does the expression "foetal position" mean in the text?

- A. Standing upright
- B. Lying flat on one's back
- C. Curled up with knees close to the chest
- D. Sitting with legs crossed

11. What does the word "megalomaniac" mean in the text?

- A. A person with an obsession for power and control
- B. A person with a strong desire to help others
- C. A person who enjoys reading books about history
- D. A person who is fascinated by science and technology

12. What does the term "Quantum Entanglement Through Time" (QETT) refer to in the text?

- A. A new type of computer processor
- B. A method of communication between different timelines
- C. A new way of generating electricity
- D. A method of time travel involving parallel universes

13. What does the phrase "dispatching him" mean in the text?

- A. Speaking with him
- B. Making him laugh
- C. Killing him
- D. Delivering a message to him

14. What does the word "chronotrigger" mean in the text?

- A. A stopwatch
- B. A type of weapon
- C. A time travel device
- D. A historical event

## Answers

1. B
2. C
3. C
4. False
5. True
6. False
7. Magnitude
8. Parallel
9. Supernatural
10. C
11. A
12. D
13. C
14. C