Time is at the heart of Arcadia, a play by Tom Stoppard. The characters in the play move along two separate time lines, brought together for audience within the single room in which all the play’s action occurs. The time lines are connected by physical objects which exist in both times. Some of these, such as the tortoise, are truly separate instances while others, such as Noake’s sketchbook, are the exact same article, aged but intact. We also learn about other things that travel between the time lines, such as ideas and emotions. In the first case we see how the time context influences how ideas are perceived, and in the second, we learn that emotions are timeless. We are also shown very graphically, through the character of Bernard, how our perception of events through time has as much to do with what we want to believe, as what truly happened.

Time is also shown to us to be a force of nature, like gravity, that drives the universe towards disorder: “we’ll all end up room temperature” says Valentine.

Your assignment is to draw a time line