

## Reading 'The Company of Wolves'

As you read the short story 'The Company of Wolves', answer the following questions.

1. All of the following words and phrases appear in the story. Use a large dictionary, e.g. a Collins or Oxford Concise, to find out what they mean:

carnivore	incarnate	benighted	wraith
aria		trepidation	acrid
canticles		irremediable	solstice
phosphorescent		metamorphosis	lycanthrope
pentacle		fungi	cuneiform
wideawake hat		disingenuously	pious
prophylactic		feral muzzle	vellum
diabolic		threnody	integument
prothalamion		Liebstd	Walpurgisnacht

2. As the story opens, what two colours do the wolf's eyes reflect; what objects do they reflect and what might the reflections mean?
3. Why, as the narrator says, should you be frightened of the wolves?
4. The narrator gives some examples of how wolves can be the enemy of humans. List three.
5. In the fourth example (of a man who vanished on his wedding night), why has the groom gone outside?
6. How is an eerie setting created for the man's disappearance?
7. What did his wife do because he didn't return?
8. What happened on the winter solstice?
9. What is a werewolf and how long is his natural lifespan?
10. A new story begins with 'It is midwinter...' Which fairy story do the first two paragraphs remind you of?
11. The colour red has already been referred to a number of times. What connotations does it have in the story as a whole (e.g. red for danger, q.2) and in particular in the second paragraph of this new story?
12. What simile is used to describe the girl's entry into the forest and what does it suggest?
13. Describe the man she meets there.
14. Quote the first indication you have that this man might be a werewolf.
15. Find two more suggestions that he might be a werewolf.
16. What does the man do to grandmother?
17. How does the writer use the language of a fairy story when the girl arrives at her grandmother's cottage?
18. How does the writer create an eerie atmosphere when the girl looks through the window at the wolves? Think of: sights (e.g. colours), sounds, movement, literary devices (e.g. alliteration, similes) and how these contribute to the scene.
19. At the end of the story, why does the wolf not eat the girl?
20. How else does this story end differently from the traditional fairy tale version?