

[A Tale Dark and Grimm](#) by Adam Gidwitz  
(Penguin, 2010)

*Once upon a time...Hansel and Gretel decided to jump out of their story and into other classic tales where they encounter warlocks with dark spells, hunters with deadly aim, and bakers with unusual ovens. Enter only if you dare.*

### Discussion Questions

1. Display of Grimm Fairy Tales. Do any of you remember reading any of these stories when you were younger? Are they the exact same stories as those in *A Tale Dark and Grimm*? How are they different? What elements in *A Tale Dark and Grimm* remind you of the real Folk and Fairy tales (number 7 or the number three, curses, leaving a trail to find your way back out of the forest)?
2. This book has a narrator who speaks directly to the reader, he is the one who says that all little children should leave the room because the next part is really scary, tells us that it is the end - almost. Why do you think the author put the narrator in the book?
3. On page 8 Faithful Johannes defines “under-stand.” Explain his definition – what did he mean by this. Did he “under-stand” the King and Queen?
4. In the story Hansel continues to hunt animals even though Gretel tries to stop him, and even though he knows it is wrong. Why can’t Hansel help himself?
5. On page 110 Gretel tells a true story as a dream and people believe her. Why do you think Gretel decided to expose the Warlock with a dream story?
6. The Ravens appear several times throughout the book, what do you think of their role in helping Gretel escape from the Dragon?
7. Why were Hansel and Gretel reluctant to go back home? How would you describe the parents in this book? Why do you think the author made the parents do such terrible things?
8. Gretel uses her powers of deduction to figure out her father was the dragon. How do you think the Dragon got inside her father?
9. At the end of the book, the narrator questions why all this gruesome violence and horror is needed. At first he says, he doesn’t know why, but then he says: p.238 “...to find the brightest wisdom one must pass through the darkest zones. And through the darkest zones there can be no guide.” What do you think he meant by this?
10. Why do you think the King made Hansel and Gretel the new King and Queen?



11. Where there some frightening parts for you in the story? Did you find anything funny about these stories? How about p. 166 when Hansel goes back to find Gretel?

Some of the above questions were adapted from The Discussion Guide to a Tale Dark and Grimm, published by Penguin Young Readers Group [www.penguin.com/teachers](http://www.penguin.com/teachers) and librarians

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