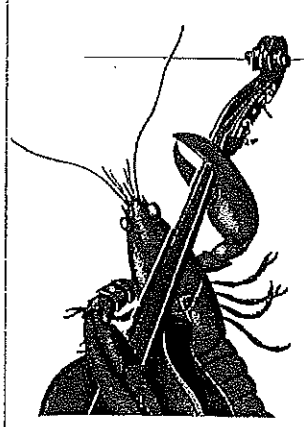

Understanding genre

You might remember us pointing out in Chapter 15 of the first book in this series, *English: Western Australia ATAR Year 11*, that – unlike texts – genres do not have a physical existence; they do not exist in the real world. Genres are purely mental concepts.

A rambler

'Genre' is a word adopted from the French language meaning category or type. In English, 'genre' is a means of describing texts of a similar type.

There is a range of ways of talking about genre. Some generic categories are extremely broad, such as exposition or narration; while others are much narrower, such as English textbooks or detective fiction. Therefore many texts fit within a number of genres of varying degrees of breadth; for example:

- This book is both an English textbook, a non-fiction text and an example of exposition.
- J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* is an example of fantasy, a novel, fiction and narrative.

There are many different ways of categorising genres, such as by:

- function – for example, description, advertisement, letter
- audience – for example, children's literature, young adult fiction, 'chick flick'
- subject matter – for example, romance, crime, adventure.
- plot – for example, quest, *bildungsroman* (growth-to-maturity novel), tragedy.
- setting (time and place) – for example, Western, space opera (epic-style adventure set in outer space), Regency romance (set in Britain's Regency Period, 1811–20)
- relationship to reality – for example, realism, fantasy, magical realism
- politics – for example, feminist, Marxist, post-colonial
- time period – for example, Victorian novel, Renaissance drama, colonial Australian poetry
- style – for example, melodrama (sensational events featuring heightened emotions), slapstick (physical comedy), comedy of manners (comedy reliant on witty dialogue).

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Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone is an example of fantasy, a novel, fiction and narrative.

The table that follows provides some more terms you might find useful when discussing genre.

Film Graphic novel Oral text Multimedia text Stage drama Television program	Video game Visual image Webpage Written text	Advertisement Description Exposition	Letter Narrative Persuasive text	Drama Non-fiction Poetry	Prose fiction: • Novel • Fable • Fairy story • Short story
Autobiography Biography Blog Email Essay Feature article Historical narrative Instruction manual Letter Memoir News report	Opinion piece Recipe Reference book Self-help book Textbook Review (e.g. of a book, film or restaurant) Travel guide Travel narrative	Documentary Anecdote Conversation Eulogy Instructional presentation Joke	Feature film Lecture Persuasive speech Riddle Seminar	Biopic Black comedy Comedy Conspiracy Courtroom drama Crime Disaster Docudrama Fantasy Historical epic Horror Martial arts Mockumentary Musical Mystery	Paranormal Quest Road Romance Romantic comedy Science fiction Space opera Spy Superhero Teen Thriller War Western Zombie
Advertisement Family photograph Graphic novel News photograph	Portrait Poster Selfie Travel photograph	Adventure *Bildungsroman* (growth to maturity) Comedy Conspiracy Crime fiction Cyberpunk Dystopic fiction Family saga Fantasy Gothic Graphic novel Historical fiction Horror Mystery	Noir fiction Paranormal Picaresque (adventures of a roguish hero) Quest Romance Science fiction Spy fiction Steam punk Sword and sorcery Tragedy War Western	Epistolary (story in letters) Magical realism (blend of fantasy and realism) Metafiction (fiction that draws attention to its own construction)	Realism Stream of consciousness (presenting a character's thoughts as they would experience them)

Some genres are defined by more than one criterion; for example:

- Regency romance is defined by both subject matter (romance) and setting.
- The film noir genre is defined by both its subject matter (crime) and its style (extensive use of shadows and low lighting).

In addition, generic categories may overlap. A story that fits within the quest genre might be an example of crime fiction, adventure, science fiction, fantasy, spy fiction or romance. It might also be an example of short story, novel, film, stage drama (play), graphic novel or video game.

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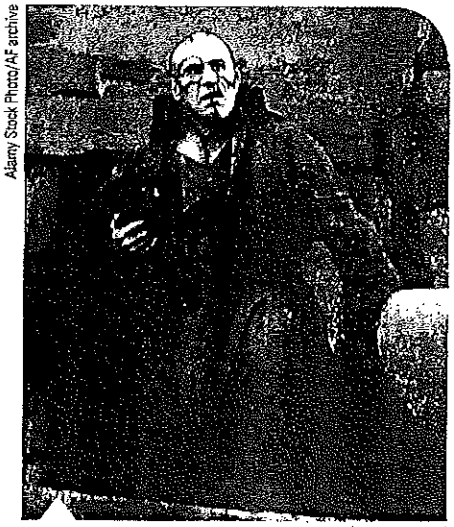

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Is *Frankenstein* an example of horror, science fiction, gothic novel and/or tragedy?

All of this has some significant results:

- First, people may use different terms to describe the same or very similar genres; for example, Ray Bradbury's short story 'The Pedestrian' (see Chapter 2) has been described as both science fiction and dystopic fiction (a story that portrays an undesirable future).
- Second, people often disagree about into which genre a text falls. Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein* (see Chapter 1), for example, has been described as an example of horror, science fiction, tragedy and gothic novel. (For a list of the conventions of the gothic novel, see below.)

So, there is no single correct answer to the question: 'What genre is this text?' However, rather than seeing this as a source of confusion or frustration, you should see it as liberating. This is because if you are asked to discuss how a text conforms to, departs from or manipulates the conventions of a particular genre, unless the actual genre is specified, you are free to discuss the text in terms of any genre you choose and are familiar with.

We will provide advice on how to tackle such questions on page 57.

Generic conventions

The term 'generic conventions' refers to the features that are common to examples of a particular genre. While the name we use to refer to a genre might highlight one feature – such as subject matter or time period – that feature alone would not lead to a text being considered a part of that genre. Rather, texts within a genre share a number of features – although it is very rare that one text will contain all of the features that could be considered to be conventions of a particular genre. It is better to think of generic conventions as being similar to a list of possible ingredients, from which authors select in order to produce a text in that genre.

Below is a list of some of the conventions of the gothic novel of which Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is often considered an example:

- ancient or decrepit settings
- the use of weather to create atmosphere
- references to light and darkness
- heightened emotions
- visions in the form of dreams
- women in danger
- monsters
- supernatural events
- ghostly figures
- entrapment
- an unreliable narrator
- portrayal of the dark side of human nature, such as excessive obsession and fascination with death.

Shutterstock.com/breakermaximus

What conventions of the gothic novel does *Frankenstein* display?

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The passage below depicts the night on which Victor Frankenstein brings his creature to life. Which of the gothic conventions listed above are evident in this passage?

It was on a dreary night of November that I beheld the accomplishment of my toils. With an anxiety that almost amounted to agony, I collected the instruments of life around me, that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet. It was already one in the morning; the rain pattered dismally against the panes, and my candle was nearly burnt out, when, by the glimmer of the half-extinguished light, I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open; it breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs.

How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe, or how delineate the wretch whom with such infinite pains and care I had endeavoured to form? His limbs were in proportion, and I had selected his features as beautiful. Beautiful! – Great God! His yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of a pearly whiteness; but these luxuriances only formed a more horrid contrast with his watery eyes, that seemed almost of the same colour as the dun white sockets in which they were set, his shrivelled complexion and straight black lips.

The different accidents of life are not so changeable as the feelings of human nature. I had worked hard for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body. For this I had deprived myself of rest and health. I had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation; but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart. Unable to endure the aspect of the being I had created, I rushed out of the room, continued a long time traversing my bed chamber, unable to compose my mind to sleep. At length lassitude succeeded to the tumult I had before endured; and I threw myself on the bed in my clothes, endeavouring to seek a few moments of forgetfulness. But it was in vain: I slept, indeed, but I was disturbed by the wildest dreams. I thought I saw Elizabeth,[1] in the bloom of health, walking in the streets of Ingolstadt. Delighted and surprised, I embraced her; but as I imprinted the first kiss on her lips, they became livid with the hue of death; her features appeared to change, and I thought that I held the corpse of my dead mother in my arms; a shroud enveloped her form, and I saw the grave-worms crawling in the folds of the flannel. I started from my sleep with horror; a cold dew covered my forehead, my teeth chattered, and every limb became convulsed: when, by the dim and yellow light of the moon, as it forced its way through the window shutters, I beheld the wretch – the miserable monster whom I had created. He held up the curtain of the bed and his eyes, if eyes they may be called, were fixed on me. His jaws opened, and he muttered some inarticulate sounds, while a grin wrinkled his cheeks. He might have spoken, but I did not hear; one hand was stretched out, seemingly to detain me, but I escaped, and rushed down stairs. I took refuge in the courtyard belonging to the house which I inhabited; where I remained during the rest of the night, walking up and down in the greatest agitation, listening attentively, catching and fearing each sound as if it were to announce the approach of the demoniacal corpse to which I had so miserably given life.

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, 1818, pp. 58–9

Form a group with some other students. Choose two of the genres listed on page 47 and make a list of the conventions you think are typical of those genres.

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Lieutenant Ellen Ripley (Sigourney Weaver) prepares to battle the monster alone in *Aliens* (1986).

Genre bending

Genre bending occurs when a text within a genre departs from one or more of the usual conventions of the genre. This is also called challenging, transgressing or subverting generic conventions.

Genre bending can be used as a source of humour or as a means of surprising an audience, but it is not always just a clever idea. Transgressing a generic convention can be a way of challenging certain ideas. This is because some generic conventions reflect particular ways of thinking about the world. For example, for many years it was a convention for a horror movie to end with the male hero defeating the monster and thus saving the female from a terrible fate. This convention constructed women as helpless victims, unable to look after themselves. So in 1979, when Ridley Scott, director of the film *Alien*, had the female Lieutenant Ellen Ripley battle and defeat the alien monster on her own, it was a considered a groundbreaking departure from convention, which also challenged ways of thinking about gender.

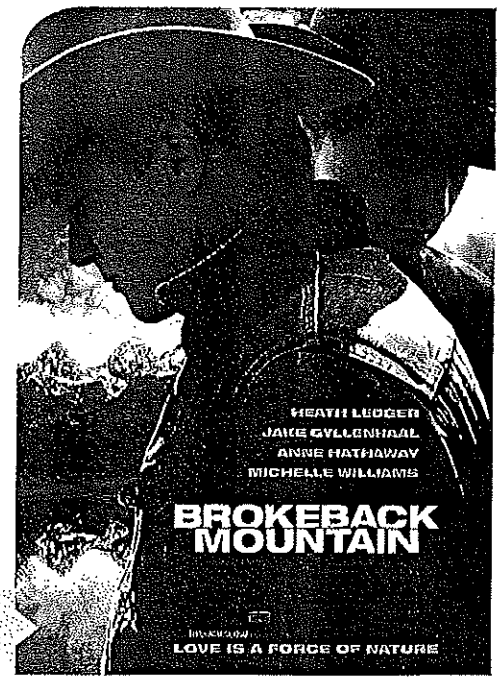
Exploring genre bending

Form a group with some other students and brainstorm a list of texts that have transgressed the accepted conventions of a genre. The film *Shrek* (2001) might be a good place to start if at least one of the group has seen it. Make a list of how each text departs from the usual generic conventions and the effects of these departures.

If enough texts copy and reproduce a departure from previous conventions, then that departure might come to be seen as one of the accepted conventions of the genre. For example, we are now no longer surprised to women in action hero roles because many texts have followed Ridley Scott's lead.

Exploring the Brokeback Mountain poster

1. Discuss how the construction of this poster signals that the film conforms to the conventions of the Western genre.
2. Discuss how the construction of the poster signals that the film departs from the conventions of the Western genre.



Alamy Stock Photo/World History Archive

Poster for the film *Brokeback Mountain* (2005), directed by Ang Lee

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Genre-Bending Example 2: Guitar Highway Rose

Below is an extract from the novel *Guitar Highway Rose* by New Zealand-born writer Brigid Lowry. The novel is set in Perth, Western Australia. The main characters are Rose and Asher, two high school students. Pip is Rose's best friend, Lily and Robert are her parents and Harry is her young brother.

WHAT ASHER WORE TO SCHOOL/WEDNESDAY

Black woollen beanie with green marijuana leaf emblem on the front. Very, very old pair of greyish sneakers — which once upon a time were white — frayed canvas hole in big toe of both. Baggy dark-blue men's work trousers with ragged cuffs and two floral patches on bum. Long-sleeved Indian shirt, paisley muslin, in groovy shades of purple and olive green.

WHAT THE HOMEROOM TEACHER SAID

Dear Reader, I invite you to write this bit yourself. Invoke your imagination. Use the words disappointed, scruffy, and disgraceful.

WHAT THE HOMEROOM TEACHER DID

Gave Asher a dress pass.

WHAT ASHER FELT

Supreme satisfaction.

ROSIE AND ASHER/WEDNESDAY

There was no English class. At lunchtime Rosie saw Asher, sitting under a tree by himself eating a brown roll stuffed with cheese and salad, with hot chips on the side. Naturally she pretended she didn't see him. At exactly the same moment Asher looked up and saw Rosie and Pip walking past. Naturally he pretended not to see them.

WHAT ROSIE FELT

Embarrassed.

WHAT ASHER FELT

Embarrassed.

THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM

It is dinnertime at the Moon's house and Lily has made pesto: basil and garlic and olive oil and parmesan and pinenuts ground to a delicious green paste to stir through the pasta. There's a crispy salad in a big blue bowl, made with two sorts of lettuce, cubes of salty fetta and sweet cherry tomatoes. The fettuccine is nearly cooked and the table has been set with a white cloth and the decent plates – the blue speckled ones. There's a big bunch of cheerful sunflowers with dusty yellow faces, a round crusty loaf, a square of butter and an elegant Italian pepper grinder made of green glass.

The evening is hot and muggy, the sort of languid weather which proves that human beings are indeed descended from the three-toed sloth, but Lily is happy, despite the

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oppressive weather. She is proud of the meal she has made, and pleased that Robert has come home early for once and seems to be in a cheerful mood. She can hear him whistling as he waters the petunias on the patio. He's a good man, really, she thinks, maybe things will come right. Harry seems very perky. A while ago he scooted in and got some ice-cubes and scooted back out again in a very purposeful fashion. He's probably doing some little science experiment, Lily thinks idly. It's great when he does things, she thinks. She hates it when he just sits in front of the telly or the computer for hours on end. It makes her feel guilty, incompetent, a bad mother.

Guitar Highway Rose, Brigid Lowry, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, NSW, 1997, pages 36–8.

Discuss how the extract from *Guitar Highway Rose* transgresses the usual conventions expected of the novel genre.

Are there any ways in which the extracts conform to our usual expectations of a novel?

Genre blending

Genre blending, a form of genre bending, occurs when a text mixes together conventions from two or more genres. Such texts are sometimes called cross-genre or hybrid texts. The film *The Matrix*, for example, blends elements from the science fiction, film noir and martials arts genres.

Form a group with some other students and brainstorm a list of texts that mix elements from different genres. Identify which elements of the text are normally associated with which genre.

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A still from *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1976), directed by Jim Sharman and featuring Tim Curry as Frank N. Furter. This movie was based on a stage musical that blended the conventions of the rock musical (itself a blend of genres), horror, comedy and science fiction.

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Genre blending example: 'The Water Buffalo'

The following passage is from the short story 'The Water Buffalo' by Australian writer Cat Thao Nguyen, published in 2008. It depicts, in fictional form, the experience of refugees from South East Asia who came to Australia after the Vietnam War (1955–75).

He was not crowned or otherwise adorned. He did not look so different, though his horns curved a little more than the rest. His back was solid and strong. Even though many flies came to rest on him, he did not flick his tail to shoo them away like the others did. He was willing to share his body. 'A product and companion of nature,' he would say. His stance was noble. He was the king.

As they gathered around him in silent acknowledgment, he looked at each one of them. He thought of his dreams for them and he imagined the future. They all nodded in agreement.

The water buffalo grazes in herds of about fifty animals. Both wild and domesticated buffaloes have a keen sense of smell.

The sky was fading and the slight breeze in the air was momentarily trapped in the tall bamboo. The herd had dissipated and he was on his own. An occasional tinker could be heard from a bell that hung around the neck of a distant cow. But the king smelled unease. His bones told him of something impending.

The darkness came and he waited. It was an unusually black night. The stars did not emerge and the slight moon was hiding. Still, the wind innocently played hide-and-seek with the bamboo.

Then, as deafening as the thunderous roar of an immense storm, screams echoed so hideous that they carved themselves onto the field. The noises came quickly, one after another, producing a monstrous earthquake of terror. The king knew it. He smelled it coming. He cocked his head to the left and listened for the next anguish. He paused. Then with graceful swiftness he sped towards the echo. Just behind the bamboo cluster, he slowed to a halt. He lowered his head and listened to the silence. After the horrific cries, the silence emerged like a lost, curious child. Then with all his might, the king groaned to the starless sky, a sound so mournful the moon came out from its hiding and sobbed. As he walked slowly among the dead herd, he knew the time had come.

He had no reason to stay and fight. What was left of his strength was buried. He was no longer a king, but an ordinary buffalo, an animal soon to be domesticated to graze and work. Leaving his heart behind, he walked towards the South.

The Indian water buffalo is used in Asian rice fields, but has been taken to many other parts of the world, including the East Indies, the Philippines, Egypt, Hungary, Spain other countries. Its bone structure and the distribution of weight across its legs make it well suited to agricultural labour.

When the king arrived in the South, he was astonished. There was so much abundance! So much fertility in the soil! Its green was so bright and wholesome he began to weep for his herd. It was busy and exciting. There was movement everywhere. No one noticed his arrival. He took up work at a local farm and, as the days and nights passed, contentment began to seep through his skin. He worked and rested and worked and rested and was fed and worked and rested. The cries of that horrific night began to fade from his ears.

After one long day, as the sky began to fade and he began to rest, he noticed that the stars did not emerge and the moon was hiding behind a cloud. It was an unusually black night and the spirits of his herd came to visit, each one gently rolling over his

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eyelids. The cries came back and haunted his ears and he groaned a mournful sigh to the starless night, wishing for the heart that he had left behind.

Then, suddenly, the ground began to move and the trees began to shake and divide. The moon split up into twenty pieces and the ground tore beneath him. He was frightened and tried to hold on to anything, but even the air was being torn and ravaged. Suddenly he felt a sense of lightness, something he had never experienced before, a lightness so beautiful he felt he was going to drift away. Then with horror and amazement, he saw the horns on his head begin to fall out as if some giant hand was plucking them from his skull. His dark blackish-blue skin began to fade and his feet were dividing into five short stalks.

Then his snout began to flatten like a mound of clay melting in the sun. His ears began retreating into his head. Afraid he would no longer be able to hear, he twitched them vigorously in a futile effort to stop them receding. He felt as if someone was stretching out his body on a canvas and he could not bear it any longer. But his eyes did not change. He squeezed them shut while rubbing them, hoping it would all disappear. Then with all his might, he yelled out a raging roar. As the rivers rippled with the sound and then became calm again, a freakish stillness overcame him. The land had stopped tearing.

Despite the buffalo's ability to adapt to its environment, physiologically it is less able to adapt to extremes of heat and cold than various breeds of cattle.

Slowly, he peeled away his hands and un-squinted his eyes. What had become of him? Who was he?

He looked around and saw concrete paths, shops, a coke machine gleaming, from a shop window and a bus pulling up to the kerb. He was confused and dazed. But these surroundings felt strangely familiar.

He slowly learned to walk. It took many weeks. After he had mastered walking on two feet, he ventured to learn to talk. This was much harder than he ever could have imagined. What was this language that these people were using and why could they not understand him? Every now and then, he would let out a groan to the sky above, but this was always quickly met with, 'Why don't you speak English?'

Buffalo hide is thick and tough and makes good leather. The water buffalo is hard working and powerfully ploughs deep into the mud, making rice farming possible in many places.

As a stranger in a new land, he began to fade into the background. He became a working man and thought, At least I am safe here, but he knew where he had left his heart. He tried hard to forget.

Cat Thao Nguyn, 'The Water Buffalo' in Alice Pung (ed), *Growing Up Asian in Australia*, Black Inc, Melbourne, 2008, pp. 32–5

Cat Thao Nguyen

Cat Thao Nguyen, is an Australian author and lawyer of Vietnamese heritage. She was born in a Thai refugee camp and grew up in western Sydney. Her 2015 book *We Are Here* tells the story of her family's flight from Vietnam and journey to Australia.

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SAMPLE ANALYSIS 'The Water Buffalo': sample discussion of genre blending

Identifies the purpose of the passage so that later points about the effect of generic conventions can be related back to this.

This passage seems to blend conventions from a number of genres to depict the experience of refugees.

The first most noticeable genre is that of the fable. Using an animal as the main character to illustrate points about human behaviour and society is a common generic convention in fables. The animal characters in fables are usually seen as representative types, rather than specific individuals. In this story, the use of this convention works to make the main character and his experiences represent the experience of many refugees, not just one individual. Portraying the main character as a water buffalo can also be read to suggest his strong ties to the soil of his homeland.

Justifies the argument that the story is fable-like.

Suggests the effects of the use of this generic convention.

Identifies another aspect of the passage associated with a different genre.

While fable-like, the passage includes elements we more commonly associate with realist fiction, such as the graphic descriptions of the effects of war. Examples of graphic description include 'the thunderous roar', the reference to screams echoing and 'the monstrous earthquake of terror'. This is the sort of description we might find in a war or disaster story. The use of realist conventions serves to bring home to us the violence and brutality many refugees have experienced.

Provides examples to support this argument.

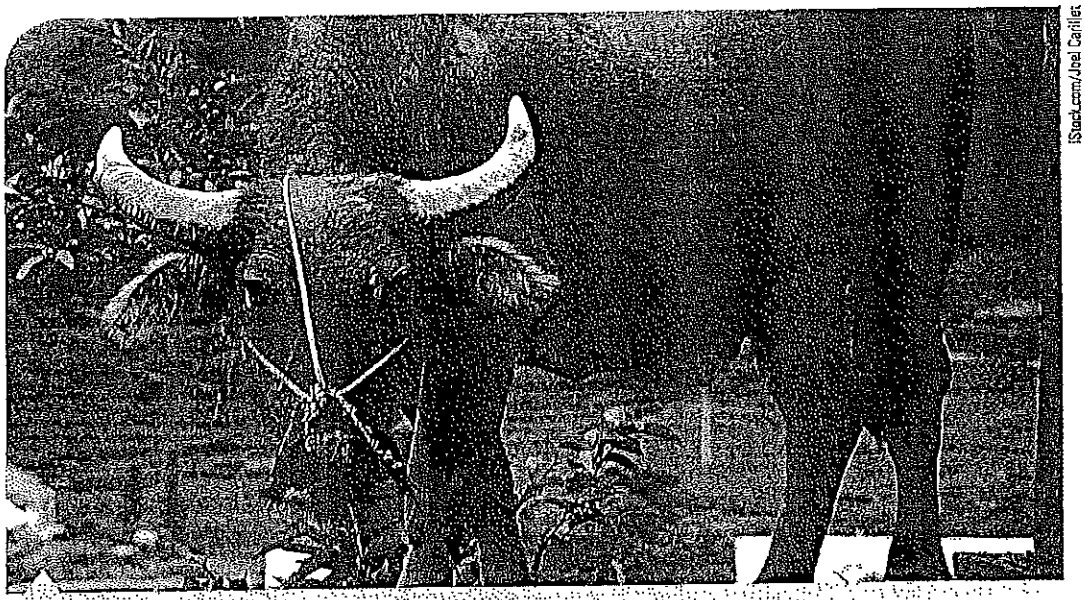
Explains the effect of the use of this generic convention.

This paragraph follows the same pattern as the previous two.

The passage also draws on the conventions of science fiction or horror in describing the change to his body that the character experiences, unnatural transformations being a common feature of those genres. The unnatural and painful nature of the changes can be seen in the description of his horns falling out 'as if some giant hand was plucking them from his skull' and his snout 'beginning to flatten like a mound of clay melting in the sun'. The use of generic conventions associated with science fiction or horror function to portray how difficult, strange and painful refugees find having to lose their connection with their homeland and adapt to an alien environment.

Another genre the passage clearly draws on is that of the reference book or encyclopaedia. This is evident in the sentences in italics interspersed throughout the story. These can be interpreted as reinforcing the strong bond many refugees have with their home soil and also suggesting their strength and resilience.

So does this one.



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What are the effects of portraying the main character as a water buffalo?

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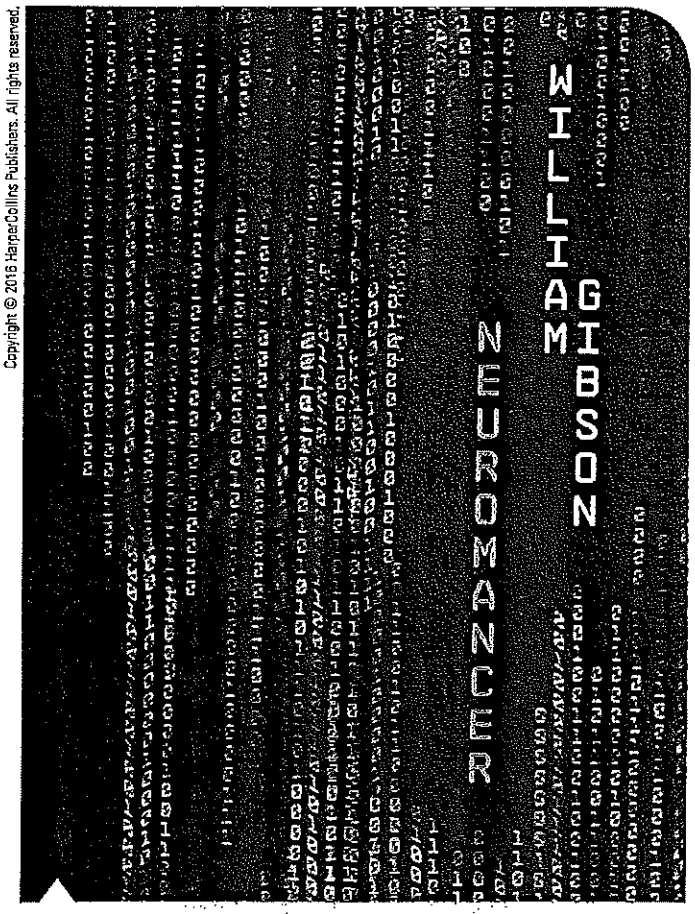
Developments in genre

Genres are rarely static; rather, they evolve over time. But, like evolution in the natural world, the rate of change can be uneven. A genre might remain static, with very similar types of text being produced for a period of time. Then there might be periods of rapid change, where genres discard some features and take on new ones.

To stay with the evolution analogy, changes in genre are usually a response to a changing environment. There can be a number of factors at work. First, after a while, audiences can become tired of constant repetition and seek more variety in a genre. Authors will therefore seek out new ways to make a genre engaging. Or maybe an author is just driven by a personal interest in innovation.

Another, and important, factor is the occurrence of change in society. A genre will often adapt to accommodate or reflect these changes. Such changes might be material or technological, or they may be changes in ideas and values.



William Gibson's novel *Neuromancer* (1984) is an example of cyberpunk fiction. Cyberpunk fiction focuses on social misfits living in a dystopic future dominated by virtual reality, and the modification of the human body and brain by digital technologies.

The evolution of science fiction

Science fiction provides a useful case study of how a genre can evolve in response to changes in society. In reading the following description of the history of science fiction, keep in mind that it is based on some broad – if valid – generalisations, which omit some important exceptions to what is described.

Leaving aside some early examples, such as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and H.G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds* (1897), science fiction first attained significant popularity as genre in the 1920s. From then until the 1940s, the general view of science reflected in science fiction was a positive one, reflecting Western society's optimistic view of technological progress.[1] After all, this was the time when motor cars, air travel, radio and household devices were becoming more widespread. Science and technology seemed to hold the promise of a better world.

Then in 1945, atomic bombs were dropped on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan. The possibilities of science took on a darker form in many people's minds. From this time onwards, science fiction tended to focus more on the potential dangers of science. For example, films and stories about the consequences of nuclear warfare and fallout began to appear. The development of surveillance technologies and their threat to individual freedom were other areas of concern and exploration, most notably in George Orwell's 1948 novel *1984* and in Ray Bradbury's 1951 short story 'The Pedestrian'.

In the 1980s, as computing technology and cybernetics began to develop more rapidly, many science fiction writers and filmmakers turned their attention to the potential hazards of this

phenomenon. Cyberpunk fiction was one result. Perhaps the best-known example of science fiction based on the perils of developments in computing is the 1999 film *The Matrix*, directed by Lana and Lily Wachowski.

Another development in science fiction since the 1980s, arising from increased environmental awareness in society, has been the emergence of the eco-disaster narrative, now considered by some as a genre in its own right.

The evolution of the Western

For many years Americans, Westerns generally portrayed the US cavalry as heroic, bringing peace and Western civilisation to the west of the USA. Native Americans, on the other hand, were frequently portrayed as violent savages. However, in the 1970s, there began to appear a number of revisionist Westerns, such as *Soldier Blue* (1970) and *Little Big Man* (1970), which portrayed Native Americans in a more sympathetic manner and the US cavalry as the perpetrators of violent massacres. This was the result of greater awareness of history, a better understanding of indigenous cultures and a loss of faith in the U.S. military, partly as a consequence of the Vietnam War.

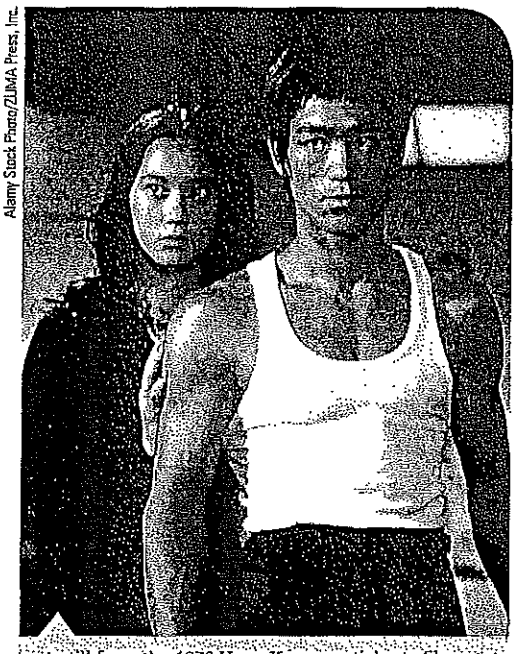
Revisionist
A text that offers an alternative to the established way of thinking about a topic.

Genre and gender

Changing attitudes to gender since the 1960s have resulted in changes to many genres, such as manga, martial arts, horror, crime fiction, science fiction, adventure and romance. Women are now less likely to be portrayed as helpless victims needing the protection of a strong male.

Explore and challenge representation of women

Discuss the differences between the way women are represented in these images.



Alamy Stock Photo/ZUMA Press, Inc.

A still from the 1972 Hong Kong martial arts film *Return of the Dragon*

Alamy Stock Photo/Moviestore Collection Ltd

A still from the 2016 film Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon: *Sword of Destiny*

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How to write about generic conventions

Set out below is some advice on how to write about generic conventions in a previously unseen text.

- Decide what genre or genres the text seems to belong to. Just think of this as trying to decide what sort of text it is. Setting, character and narrative voice are often useful clues to the genre of a text. Remember that a text may display features of more than one type of genre.
- Do not worry about choosing the 'right' genre. Remember that many people disagree about what text a genre belongs to. Also, do not worry too much about naming the genre 'correctly'. There are different ways of referring to the same genre.
- Decide what led you to identify a particular genre. These will be the generic elements you can write about.
- Suggest the effect of these elements on the ideas or feelings conveyed by the text.
- If all else fails, treat the text as an example of a broad genre – such as novel, short story, feature article, poster or advertisement – and discuss the conventions of this genre. For example, in the case of a novel you could write about conventions such as foreshadowing, conflict, characterisation, the use of setting and the creation of atmosphere, to name just a few. For a guide on how to discuss the conventions of the short story, you should refer to the discussion of 'The Pedestrian' in Chapter 2 and 'The Young Man Who Flew Past' in Chapter 5.

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE BY JANE AUSTEN

The news that a wealthy young gentleman named Charles Bingley has rented the manor of Netherfield Park causes a great stir in the nearby village of Longbourn, especially in the Bennet household. The Bennets have five unmarried daughters—from oldest to youngest, Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Kitty, and Lydia—and Mrs. Bennet is desperate to see them all married. After Mr. Bennet pays a social visit to Mr. Bingley, the Bennets attend a ball at which Mr. Bingley is present. He is taken with Jane and spends much of the evening dancing with her. His close friend, Mr. Darcy, is less pleased with the evening and haughtily refuses to dance with Elizabeth, which makes everyone view him as arrogant and obnoxious.

At social functions over subsequent weeks, however, Mr. Darcy finds himself increasingly attracted to Elizabeth's charm and intelligence. Jane's friendship with Mr. Bingley also continues to burgeon, and Jane pays a visit to the Bingley mansion. On her journey to the house she is caught in a downpour and catches ill, forcing her to stay at Netherfield for several days. In order to tend to Jane, Elizabeth hikes through muddy fields and arrives with a spattered dress, much to the disdain of the snobbish Miss Bingley, Charles Bingley's sister. Miss Bingley's spite only increases when she notices that Darcy, whom she is pursuing, pays quite a bit of attention to Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth and Jane return home, they find Mr. Collins visiting their household. Mr. Collins is a young clergyman who stands to inherit Mr. Bennet's property, which has been "entailed," meaning that it can only be passed down to male heirs. Mr. Collins is a pompous fool, though he is quite enthralled by the Bennet girls. Shortly after his arrival, he makes a proposal of marriage to Elizabeth. She turns him down, wounding his pride. Meanwhile, the Bennet girls have become friendly with militia officers stationed in a nearby town. Among them is Wickham, a handsome young soldier who is friendly toward Elizabeth and tells her how Darcy cruelly cheated him out of an inheritance.

At the beginning of winter, the Bingleys and Darcy leave Netherfield and return to London, much to Jane's dismay. A further shock arrives with the news that Mr. Collins has become engaged to Charlotte Lucas, Elizabeth's best friend and the poor daughter of a local knight. Charlotte explains to Elizabeth that she is getting older and needs the match for financial reasons. Charlotte and Mr. Collins get married and Elizabeth promises to visit them at their new home. As winter progresses, Jane visits the city to see friends (hoping also that she might see Mr. Bingley). However, Miss Bingley visits her and behaves rudely, while Mr. Bingley fails to visit her at all. The marriage prospects for the Bennet girls appear bleak.

That spring, Elizabeth visits Charlotte, who now lives near the home of Mr. Collins's patron, Lady Catherine de Bourgh, who is also Darcy's aunt. Darcy calls on Lady Catherine and encounters Elizabeth, whose presence leads him to make a number of visits to the Collins's home, where she is staying. One day, he makes a shocking proposal of marriage, which Elizabeth quickly refuses. She tells Darcy that she considers him arrogant and unpleasant, then scolds him for steering Bingley away from Jane and disinheriting Wickham. Darcy leaves her but shortly thereafter delivers a letter to her. In this letter, he admits that he urged Bingley to distance himself from Jane, but claims he did so only because he thought their romance was not serious. As for Wickham, he informs Elizabeth that the young officer is a liar and that the real cause of their disagreement was Wickham's attempt to elope with his young sister, Georgiana Darcy.

This letter causes Elizabeth to reevaluate her feelings about Darcy. She returns home and acts coldly toward Wickham. The militia is leaving town, which makes the younger, rather man-crazy Bennet girls distraught. Lydia manages to obtain permission from her father to spend the summer with an old colonel in Brighton, where Wickham's regiment will be stationed. With the arrival of June, Elizabeth goes on another journey, this time with the Gardiners, who are relatives of the Bennets. The trip takes her to the North and eventually to the neighborhood of Pemberley, Darcy's estate. She visits Pemberley, after making sure that Darcy is away, and delights in the building

and grounds, while hearing from Darcy's servants that he is a wonderful, generous master. Suddenly, Darcy arrives and behaves cordially toward her. Making no mention of his proposal, he entertains the Gardiners and invites Elizabeth to meet his sister.

Shortly thereafter, however, a letter arrives from home, telling Elizabeth that Lydia has eloped with Wickham and that the couple is nowhere to be found, which suggests that they may be living together out of wedlock. Fearful of the disgrace such a situation would bring on her entire family, Elizabeth hastens home. Mr. Gardiner and Mr. Bennet go off to search for Lydia, but Mr. Bennet eventually returns home empty-handed. Just when all hope seems lost, a letter comes from Mr. Gardiner saying that the couple has been found and that Wickham has agreed to marry Lydia in exchange for an annual income. The Bennets are convinced that Mr. Gardiner has paid off Wickham, but Elizabeth learns that the source of the money, and of her family's salvation, was none other than Darcy.

Now married, Wickham and Lydia return to Longbourn briefly, where Mr. Bennet treats them coldly. They then depart for Wickham's new assignment in the North of England. Shortly thereafter, Bingley returns to Netherfield and resumes his courtship of Jane. Darcy goes to stay with him and pays visits to the Bennets but makes no mention of his desire to marry Elizabeth. Bingley, on the other hand, presses his suit and proposes to Jane, to the delight of everyone but Bingley's haughty sister. While the family celebrates, Lady Catherine de Bourgh pays a visit to Longbourn. She corners Elizabeth and says that she has heard that Darcy, her nephew, is planning to marry her. Since she considers a Bennet an unsuitable match for a Darcy, Lady Catherine demands that Elizabeth promise to refuse him. Elizabeth spiritedly refuses, saying she is not engaged to Darcy, but she will not promise anything against her own happiness. A little later, Elizabeth and Darcy go out walking together and he tells her that his feelings have not altered since the spring. She tenderly accepts his proposal, and both Jane and Elizabeth are married.

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE – GENRE CHANGE

Elizabeth Bennet and her four sisters live on a countryside estate with their parents. Mr. Bennet guides his daughters in martial arts and weapons training, molding them into a fearsome zombie-fighting army; meanwhile, Mrs. Bennet endeavours to marry the girls off to wealthy suitors. When the wealthy and single Charles Bingley purchases a nearby house, Mrs. Bennet spies an opportunity and sends the girls to the first ball where Bingley is expected to appear. The girls defend the party from a zombie attack, and attraction sparks between Mr. Bingley and the eldest daughter Jane Bennet. Elizabeth clashes with Bingley's friend, the haughty monster-hunter Fitzwilliam Darcy.

The Bennets are shaken when Bingley and his companions suddenly abandon his country home and return to the walled fortress city of London with little explanation. When the local militia arrives in town to exhume and destroy dead bodies, Elizabeth becomes friendly with one of the soldiers, George Wickham, who tells Elizabeth that Darcy cheated Wickham out of an inheritance.

Elizabeth's dislike of Darcy intensifies when she learns that Darcy plotted to separate Bingley from her sister Jane. Elizabeth vows to avenge the slight to her family by killing Darcy, and she is afforded that opportunity when he appears unannounced at the cottage where she is visiting her newlywed friend Charlotte (who has been secretly bitten by a zombie and is slowly turning into one herself). Before Elizabeth can fetch her katana and behead him, Darcy surprises her by proposing marriage. The scene culminates in a vicious verbal and physical fight, in which Darcy is wounded. He escapes with his life and writes a long letter to Elizabeth explaining his actions. He separated Jane and Bingley out of fear that Jane had contracted the "mysterious plague" and with regard to the allegedly wronged soldier Wickham, Darcy explains that Wickham had attempted to elope with Darcy's younger sister to take her considerable fortune – this was the "inheritance" that Wickham had claimed. Elizabeth realizes that she has judged Darcy too harshly, and is humbled. Darcy realizes that his arrogant nature encourages people to believe the rumors about him, and resolves to act more appropriately.

Elizabeth embarks on a trip around the country with her aunt and uncle, fighting zombies along the way. At Pemberley she encounters Darcy, who repels a horde of zombies. Darcy's changed attitude and mannerisms impress Elizabeth and lead her to consider reconciling their relationship; her hopes are dashed when her younger sister Lydia elopes to London with Wickham. The Bennet family fears the worst, but receive word that Wickham and Lydia have married, following an "accident" that has rendered Wickham an incontinent quadriplegic. After visiting the Bennets, the couple adjourns to Ireland. Elizabeth discovers that it was Darcy who engineered the union, thus saving the Bennet family from ruin. Meanwhile, Mr. Collins who previously married (the secretly-plague-stricken) Charlotte Lucas, realizes she has turned into a zombie, and hangs himself, after beheading and burning Charlotte.

Darcy and Bingley return to the countryside, and Bingley resumes courting Jane. Elizabeth hopes to renew her relationship with Darcy, but his aunt, the Lady Catherine, interferes, insisting that her daughter Anne is a better match for her nephew. Lady Catherine challenges Elizabeth to a fight to the death, intent on eliminating the competition, but Elizabeth defeats Catherine and later her cadre of ninjas. Elizabeth spares Catherine's life. Darcy is touched by this gesture, and returns to Elizabeth. They cheerfully wipe out a dozen zombies (their first battle as a couple), are married, and begin a long and happy future together, insofar as the ever-present threat of zombie apocalypse permits it. In other words the writer Jane Austen shows the power of love and happiness to overcome class boundaries and prejudices in the marriage.

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY BY JANE AUSTEN

When Mr. Henry Dashwood dies, leaving all his money to his first wife's son John Dashwood, his second wife and her three daughters are left with no permanent home and very little income. Mrs. Dashwood and her daughters (Elinor, Marianne, and Margaret) are invited to stay with their distant relations, the Middletons, at Barton Park. Elinor is sad to leave their home at Norland because she has become closely attached to Edward Ferrars, the brother-in-law of her half-brother John. However, once at Barton Park, Elinor and Marianne discover many new acquaintances, including the retired officer and bachelor Colonel Brandon, and the gallant and impetuous John Willoughby, who rescues Marianne after she twists her ankle running down the hills of Barton in the rain. Willoughby openly and unabashedly courts Marianne, and together the two flaunt their attachment to one another, until Willoughby suddenly announces that he must depart for London on business, leaving Marianne lovesick and miserable. Meanwhile, Anne and Lucy Steele, two recently discovered relations of Lady Middleton's mother, Mrs. Jennings, arrive at Barton Park as guests of the Middletons. Lucy ingratiates herself to Elinor and informs her that she (Lucy) has been secretly engaged to Mr. Ferrars for a whole year. Elinor initially assumes that Lucy is referring to Edward's younger brother, Robert, but is shocked and pained to learn that Lucy is actually referring to her own beloved Edward.

In Volume II of the novel, Elinor and Marianne travel to London with Mrs. Jennings. Colonel Brandon informs Elinor that everyone in London is talking of an engagement between Willoughby and Marianne, though Marianne has not told her family of any such attachment. Marianne is anxious to be reunited with her beloved Willoughby, but when she sees him at a party in town, he cruelly rebuffs her and then sends her a letter denying that he ever had feelings for her. Colonel Brandon tells Elinor of Willoughby's history of callousness and debauchery, and Mrs. Jennings confirms that Willoughby, having squandered his fortune, has become engaged to the wealthy heiress Miss Grey.

In Volume III, Lucy's older sister inadvertently reveals the news of Lucy's secret engagement to Edward Ferrars. Edward's mother is outraged at the information and disinherits him, promising his fortune to Robert instead. Meanwhile, the Dashwood sisters visit family friends at Cleveland on their way home from London. At Cleveland, Marianne develops a severe cold while taking long walks in the rain, and she falls deathly ill. Upon hearing of her illness, Willoughby comes to visit, attempting to explain his misconduct and seek forgiveness. Elinor pities him and ultimately shares his story with Marianne, who finally realizes that she behaved imprudently with Willoughby and could never have been happy with him anyway. Mrs. Dashwood and Colonel Brandon arrive at Cleveland and are relieved to learn that Marianne has begun to recover.

When the Dashwoods return to Barton, they learn from their manservant that Lucy Steele and Mr. Ferrars are engaged. They assume that he means Edward Ferrars, and are thus unsurprised, but Edward himself soon arrives and corrects their misconception: it was Robert, not himself, whom the money-grubbing Lucy ultimately decided to marry. Thus,x Edward is finally free to propose to his beloved Elinor, and not long after, Marianne and Colonel Brandon become engaged as well. The couples live together at Delaford and remain in close touch with their mother and younger sister at Barton Cottage.

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY – GENRE CHANGE

The story follows the plot of *Sense and Sensibility*, but places the novel in an alternate universe version of Regency era United Kingdom where an event known as "The Alteration" has turned the creatures of the sea against mankind. In addition, this unexplained event spawns numerous "sea monsters," including sea serpents, giant lobsters, and man-eating jellyfish.

The wealthy Henry Dashwood lives on his estate, Norland Park, with his second wife and their three daughters - Elinor, Marianne, and Margaret. Dashwood embarks on a journey to discover the source of The Alteration, but is fatally attacked by a hammerhead shark. Upon his death the estate passes not to Mrs. Dashwood and her daughters but rather to Mr. Dashwood's son John, the child of his first wife.

Before expiring from his shark wounds, the elder Dashwood asks John to take care of his stepmother and half-sisters. John initially agrees to do so but is soon influenced by his greedy wife Fanny into giving the girls nothing at all. John and Fanny move into Norland, prompting the scorned Dashwood women to seek living space elsewhere.

Mrs. Dashwood's cousin Sir John Middleton invites her to stay at a cottage situated on an archipelago off the coast of Devonshire. Although Devonshire is considered to have England's highest concentration of sea monsters, Mrs. Dashwood accepts the offer and the four women relocate to a windswept shanty known as Barton Cottage. Here they are treated kindly by Sir John, who invites them to dine at his heavily fortified manor house on nearby Deadwind Island. They are soon introduced to Sir John's family and friends, including his wife (a former island princess whom Sir John kidnapped and carried back to Britain and makes an escape attempt every couple of weeks), her mother (also kidnapped by Sir John and now calling herself "Mrs. Jennings"), and Colonel Brandon, a quiet and reserved gentleman who is also a part-man, part-squid mutant.

The move to Barton Cottage serves to separate Elinor from Fanny's brother Edward Ferrars. The unassuming and somewhat unremarkable Edward is clearly attracted to Elinor, and she to him, but Fanny makes it clear that their wealthy mother would never tolerate a marriage between Edward and the poor Elinor, insisting instead that he be married off to a woman of high rank and great wealth. Edward visits Elinor at Norland just before the move, and his reserved behavior makes her wonder if he is truly interested in her. His subsequent failure to visit her at her new island home only reinforces this suspicion.

In contrast to Elinor's woes, Marianne soon finds two suitors. Colonel Brandon is smitten with her, but she finds his age (35) and his tentacle-covered face to be repulsive. While out for a walk, Marianne falls into a rain-swollen creek and is attacked by an octopus. She is saved by the handsome John Willoughby, a dashing adventurer and deep-sea diver who has come to the archipelago to visit his aunt. The two of them are soon inseparable and Elinor begins to suspect that the two are planning on getting engaged. Unfortunately for Marianne, Willoughby is suddenly called away to the undersea city of Sub-Marine Station Beta, leaving her heartbroken and alone.

Edward Ferrars finally pays a visit to the Dashwoods at Barton Cottage, but his continued unhappiness and reserved nature lead Elinor to decide that he no longer has feelings for her. Given her mother's sorrow at being banished to the forlorn Devonshire coast and Marianne's sorrow at being abandoned by Willoughby, Elinor decides that she must hide her own sorrow for the good of the family. Elinor is soon dealt a double shock when Lady Middleton's cousins, Anne and Lucy Steele, come to visit. While out rowing, Elinor and Lucy are attacked by a fearsome sea serpent known as the Devonshire Fang-Beast, and the two barely escape with their lives. In the middle of the desperate struggle, Lucy informs Elinor that she has been engaged to Edward for more than four years. Elinor again hides her true feelings and wishes Lucy the best; secretly, she believes that Edward is only engaged to Lucy out of a sense of honor and duty and hopes for the two of them to somehow break the engagement.

To cheer up the two elder Dashwood sisters, Mrs. Jennings offers to take them to Sub-Marine Station Beta. (There was an earlier Sub-Marine Station Alpha located in the Irish Sea, but it was destroyed by a treacherous merman.) The Station is a massive iron and glass undersea dome housing a large city, public gardens, shops, and a research laboratory where scientists plot new ways to defeat their aquatic enemies. Here Marianne attempts to renew her courtship with Willoughby, only to find him cold and unresponsive to her advances. When Willoughby leaves Marianne to fend for herself against an attack of giant lobsters, she demands an answer from him, and gets one: she learns that he is engaged to the very wealthy Miss Grey, news which leaves Marianne devastated. She admits to Elinor that she and Willoughby were never officially engaged, but his attentions towards her led her to believe that he loved her and would eventually marry her.

Meanwhile, the truth about Willoughby's real character starts to emerge; Colonel Brandon tells Elinor that Willoughby had seduced Brandon's ward, fifteen-year-old Eliza Williams, and then abandoned her in a most cruel way - playfully burying her up to her neck in sand, then leaving her. Colonel Brandon was once in love with Miss Williams' mother, a woman who resembled Marianne and whose life was destroyed by an unhappy arranged marriage to the Colonel's brother.

The Steele sisters arrive at Sub-Marine Station Beta along with John and Fanny Dashwood, Edward, and Edward's mother. Lucy is overjoyed when Edward's mother prefers her to Elinor, but her happiness is soon ruined when Anne lets it slip that Edward and Lucy are engaged. Edward is immediately disinherited and his fortune passes to his brother; however, Elinor and her friends respect Edward's choice of love and honor over money. Colonel Brandon offers Edward a modest income as a lighthouse keeper to help him get started on a new life.

The vacation at Sub-Marine Station Beta is abruptly ended when schools of swordfish begin ramming the glass dome in the hopes of breaking it. They eventually succeed with the help of a narwhal and other sea creatures; the Dashwood sisters and their friends barely manage to escape before the dome breaks and floods. While riding an emergency ferry to the surface, Elinor encounters Edward's brother Robert and is disheartened to see that Robert cares more for his newfound inheritance than for the fate of his brother.

The sisters and Mrs. Jennings retire to the *Cleveland*, a houseboat owned by Mrs. Jennings' son-in-law (and Sir John's fellow mercenary) Mr. Palmer. Soon after arriving, a depressed Marianne is attacked by mosquitoes and develops malaria. The Palmers leave for their own safety, and only after they are gone does Elinor realize the sudden danger they are in; the area around the *Cleveland* is home to the bloodthirsty Pirate Dreadbeard, and Dreadbeard's friendship with Mr. Palmer is the only thing keeping them safe. Without Palmer, the *Cleveland* and the Dashwood sisters are at the mercy of the pirates. As Marianne is deathly ill and unable to move, Colonel Brandon volunteers to swim to Barton Cottage and return with Mrs. Dashwood. This leaves Elinor and Mrs. Jennings to defend the *Cleveland.*

Hearing of Marianne's illness, Willoughby journeys to the *Cleveland* and helps Elinor booby-trap the vessel; he also explains that when torn between love of Marianne and the lure of Miss Grey's wealth, he chose the latter and was deeply regretful about it. Willoughby departs just as Pirate Dreadbeard and his men arrive. Elinor and Mrs. Jennings bravely defend their ship, and Elinor summons a swarm of octopi using a special whistle that she has obtained from Willoughby. Dreadbeard's men are soon massacred by the tentacled monsters, while the Pirate himself is killed by the returning Colonel Brandon.

Marianne recovers from her malaria. Elinor passes along Willoughby's confession, and Marianne admits that she could never have been truly happy being married to such a selfish man. She points out that the combination of her wish for death and her deadly illness was morally equivalent to attempting suicide, and resolves to model herself after Elinor.

A servant reports to the Dashwoods that Mr. Ferrars has married Lucy. Elinor is overcome by pain and visions of a five-pointed star; upon reflection, she realizes that the pain and visions have been with her (and always appear most forcefully) whenever Lucy is around. Sir John surmises that Lucy must be a sea witch - a monster that seduces human men and sucks the marrow from its victim's bones. Before Elinor can form a plan to save Edward, he arrives at Barton Cottage. The Dashwoods learn that it was *Robert* Ferrars, not Edward, that married Lucy. They resolve to leave Robert to his terrible fate, feeling that he deserves it.

The happy occasion is literally upended when the island upon which Barton Cottage rests suddenly rises from the ocean; it turns out to be not an island at all, but rather a monstrous sea-beast known as Leviathan, awakened from a long slumber and hungry for all sorts of marine life.

The characters survive their sudden upheaval from their former island home. Edward reconciles with his mother and asks Elinor to marry him; and she agrees. The couple begin a simple new life tending to the lighthouse at Delaford. Marianne resolves to become a marine engineer so that she can design a new Sub-Marine Station Gamma dome. Despite herself, she comes to fall in love with Colonel Brandon, and the two eventually marry. Willoughby, somewhat to his dismay, is forgiven by his aunt for his treatment of Eliza and reclaims his inheritance. He realizes that had he married Marianne for love instead of Miss Grey for money, he would have eventually attained both love and money. Instead he is left to ponder what might have been.

Angela Carter, "The Company of Wolves"

Published in *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979). The footnotes are not part of Carter's text; they have been added to this version for classroom use.

One beast and only one howls in the woods by night.

The wolf is carnivore incarnate and he's as cunning as he is ferocious; once he's had a taste of flesh then nothing else will do.

At night, the eyes of wolves shine like candle flames, yellowish, reddish, but that is because the pupils of their eyes fatten on darkness and catch the light from your lantern to flash it back to you – red for danger; if a wolf's eyes reflect only moonlight, then they gleam a cold and unnatural green, a mineral, a piercing colour. If the benighted traveller spies those luminous, terrible sequins stitched suddenly on the black thickets, then he knows he must run, if fear has not struck him stock-still.

But those eyes are all you will be able to glimpse of the forest assassins as they cluster invisibly round your smell of meat as you go through the wood unwisely late. They will be like shadows, they will be like wraiths, grey members of a congregation of nightmare; hark! his long, wavering howl . . . an aria of fear made audible.

The wolfsong is the sound of the rending you will suffer, in itself a murdering.

It is winter and cold weather. In this region of mountain and forest, there is now nothing for the wolves to eat. Goats and sheep are locked up in the byre,[1] the deer departed for the remaining pasturage on the southern slopes – wolves grow lean and famished. There is so little flesh on them that you could count the starveling ribs through their pelts, if they gave you time before they pounced. Those slavering jaws; the lolling tongue; the rime of saliva on the grizzled chops – of all the teeming perils of the night and the forest, ghosts, hobgoblins, ogres that grill babies upon gridirons, witches that fatten their captives in cages for cannibal tables, the wolf is worst for he cannot listen to reason.

You are always in danger in the forest, where no people are. Step between the portals of the great pines where the shaggy branches tangle about you, trapping the unwary traveller in nets as if the vegetation itself were in a plot with the wolves who live there, as though the wicked trees go fishing on behalf of their friends – step between the gateposts of the forest with the greatest trepidation and infinite precautions, for if you stray from the path for one instant, the wolves will eat you. They are grey as famine, they are as unkind as plague. .

The grave-eyed children of the sparse villages always carry knives with them when they go out to tend the little flocks of goats that provide the homesteads with acrid milk and rank, maggoty cheeses. Their knives are half as big as they are, the blades are sharpened daily.

But the wolves have ways of arriving at your own hearthside. We try and try but sometimes we cannot keep them out. There is no winter's night the cottager does not fear to see a lean, grey, famished snout questing under the door, and there was a woman once bitten in her own kitchen as she was straining the macaroni.

Fear and flee the wolf; for, worst of all, the wolf may be more than he seems.

There was a hunter once, near here, that trapped a wolf in a pit. This wolf had massacred the sheep and goats; eaten up a mad old man who used to live by himself in a hut halfway up the mountain and sing to Jesus all day; pounced on a girl looking after the sheep, but she made such a commotion that men came with rifles and scared him away and tried to track him into the forest but he was cunning and easily gave them the slip. So this hunter dug a pit and put a duck in it, for bait, all alive-oh; and he covered the pit with straw smeared with wolf dung. Quack, quack! went the duck and a wolf came slinking out of the forest, a big one, a heavy one, he weighed as much as a grown man and the straw gave way beneath him – into the pit he tumbled. The hunter jumped down after him, slit his throat, cut off all his paws for a trophy.

[1] byre: a small building for livestock

And then no wolf at all lay in front of the hunter but the bloody trunk of a man, headless, footless, dying, dead.

A witch from up the valley once turned an entire wedding party into wolves because the groom had settled on another girl. She used to order them to visit her, at night, from spite, and they would sit and howl around her cottage for her, serenading her with their misery.

Not so very long ago, a young woman in our village married a man who vanished clean away on her wedding night. The bed was made with new sheets and the bride lay down in it; the groom said, he was going out to relieve himself, insisted on it, for the sake of decency, and she drew the coverlet up to her chin and she lay there. And she waited and she waited and then she waited again - surely he's been gone a long time? Until she jumps up in bed and shrieks to hear a howling, coming on the wind from the forest.

That long-drawn, wavering howl has, for all its fearful resonance, some inherent sadness in it, as if the beasts would love to be less beastly if only they knew how and never cease to mourn their own condition. There is a vast melancholy in the canticles[2] of the wolves, melancholy infinite as the forest, endless as these long nights of winter and yet that ghastly sadness, that mourning for their own, irremediable appetites, can never move the heart for not one phrase in it hints at the possibility of redemption; grace could not come to the wolf from its own despair, only through some external mediator, so that, sometimes, the beast will look as if he half welcomes the knife that despatches him. The young woman's brothers searched the outhouses and the haystacks but never found any

remains so the sensible girl dried her eyes and found herself another husband not too shy to piss into a pot who spent the nights indoors. She gave him a pair of bonny babies and all went right as a trivet until, one freezing night; the night of the solstice, the hinge of the year when things do not fit together as well as they should, the longest night, her first good man came home again.

A great thump on the door announced him as she was stirring the soup for the father of her children and she knew him the moment she lifted the latch to him although it was years since she'd worn black for him and now he was in rags and his hair hung down his back and never saw a comb, alive with lice.

'Here I am again, missus,' he said. 'Get me my bowl of cabbage and be quick about it.'

Then her second husband came in with wood for the fire and when the first one saw she'd slept with another man and, worse, clapped his red eyes on her little children who'd crept into the kitchen to see what all the din was about, he shouted: 'I wish I were a wolf again, to teach this whore a lesson!' So a wolf he instantly became and tore off the eldest boy's left foot before he was chopped up with the hatchet they used for chopping logs. But when the wolf lay bleeding and gasping its last, the pelt peeled off again and he was just as he had been, years ago, when he ran away from his marriage bed, so that she wept and her second husband beat her.

They say there's an ointment the Devil gives you that turns you into a wolf the minute you rub it on. Or, that he was born feet first and had a wolf for his father and his torso is a man's but his legs and genitals are a wolf's. And he has a wolf's heart.

Seven years is a werewolf's natural span but if you burn his human clothing you condemn him to wolfishness for the rest of his life, so old wives hereabouts think it some protection to throw a hat or an apron at the werewolf, as if clothes made the man. Yet by the eyes, those phosphorescent eyes, you know him in all his shapes; the eyes alone unchanged by metamorphosis.

Before he can become a wolf, the lycanthrope strips stark naked. If you spy a naked man among the pines, you must run as if the Devil were after you.

It is midwinter and the robin, the friend of man, sits on the handle of the gardener's spade and sings. It is the worst time in all the year for wolves but this strong-minded child insists she will go off

2 canticle: a short song or hymn incorporated into a worship service through the wood. She is quite sure the wild beasts cannot harm her although, well-warned, she lays a carving knife in the basket her mother has packed with cheeses. There is a bottle of harsh liquor distilled from brambles; a batch of flat oatcakes baked on the hearthstone; a pot or two of jam. The flaxen-haired girl will take these delicious gifts to a reclusive grandmother so old the burden of her years is crushing her to death. Granny lives two hours' trudge through the winter woods; the child wraps herself up in her thick shawl, draws it over her head. She steps into her stout wooden shoes; she is dressed and ready and it is Christmas Eve. The malign door of the solstice3 still swings upon its hinges but she has been too much loved ever to feel scared.

Children do not stay young for long in this savage country. There are no toys for them to play with so they work hard and grow wise but this one, so pretty and the youngest of her family, a little late-comer, had been indulged by her mother and the grandmother who'd knitted her the red shawl that, today, has the ominous if brilliant look of blood on snow; her breasts have just begun to swell; her hair is like lint, so fair it hardly makes a shadow on her pale forehead; her cheeks are an emblematic scarlet and white and she has just started her woman's bleeding, the clock inside her that will strike, henceforward, once a month.

She stands and moves within the invisible pentacle of her own virginity. She is an unbroken egg; she is a sealed vessel; she has inside her a magic space the entrance to which is shut tight with a plug of membrane; she is a closed system; she does not know how to shiver. She has her knife and she is afraid of nothing.

Her father might forbid her, if he were home, but he is away in the forest, gathering wood, and her mother cannot deny her.

The forest closed upon her like a pair of jaws.

There is always something to look at in the forest, even in the middle of winter – the huddled mounds of birds, succumbed to the lethargy of the season, heaped on the creaking boughs and too forlorn to sing; the bright frills of the winter fungi on the blotched trunks of the trees; the cuneiform slots of rabbits and deer, the herringbone tracks of the birds, a hare as lean as a rasher of bacon streaking across the path where the thin sunlight dapples the russet brakes of last year's bracken.

When she heard the freezing howl of a distant wolf, her practised hand sprang to the handle of her knife, but she saw no sign of a wolf at all, nor of a naked man, neither, but then she heard a clattering among the brushwood and there sprang on to the path a fully clothed one, a very handsome young one, in the green coat and wideawake hat4 of a hunter, laden with carcasses of game birds. She had her hand on her knife at the first rustle of twigs but he laughed with a flash of white teeth when he saw her and made her a comic yet flattering little bow; she'd never seen such a fine fellow before, not among the rustic clowns of her native village. So on they went together, through the thickening light of the afternoon.

Soon they were laughing and joking like old friends. When he offered to carry her basket, she gave it to him although her knife was in it because he told her his rifle would protect them. As the day darkened, it began to snow again; she

felt the first flakes settle on her eyelashes but now there was only half a mile to go and there would be a fire, and hot tea, and a welcome, a warm one, surely, for the dashing huntsman as well as for herself.
This young man had a remarkable object in his pocket. It was a compass. She looked at the little round glass face in the palm of his hand and watched the wavering needle with a vague wonder. He assured her this compass had taken him safely through the wood on his hunting trip because the needle always told him with perfect accuracy where the north was. She did not believe it; she knew she should never leave the path on the way through the wood or else she would be lost instantly. He

3 The winter solstice, usually occurring Dec. 22, marks the sun's (apparent) lowest point in the sky. This day, the shortest of the year (and thus the longest night of the year) is the "depth" or midpoint of winter. "malign": of an evil or harmful influence

4 wideawake hat: a round, broad-brimmed hat favored by Quakers and other American men in the later 19th Century.

laughed at her again; gleaming trails of spittle clung to his teeth. He said, if he plunged off the path into the forest that surrounded them, he could guarantee to arrive at her grandmother's house a good quarter of an hour before she did, plotting his way through the undergrowth with his compass, while she trudged the long way, along the winding path.
'I don't believe you. Besides, aren't you afraid of the wolves?'
He only tapped the gleaming butt of his rifle and grinned.
'Is it a bet?' he asked her. 'Shall we make a game of it? What will you give me if I get to your grandmother's house before you?'
'What would you like?' she asked disingenuously.
'A kiss.'
Commonplaces of a rustic seduction; she lowered her eyes and blushed.
He went through the undergrowth and took her basket with him but she forgot to be afraid of the beasts, although now the moon was rising, for she wanted to dawdle on her way to make sure the handsome gentleman would win his wager.
Grandmother's house stood by itself a little way out of the village. The freshly falling snow blew in eddies about the kitchen garden and the young man stepped delicately up the snowy path to the door as if he were reluctant to get his feet wet, swinging his bundle of game and the girl's basket and humming a little tune to himself.
There is a faint trace of blood en his chin; he has been snacking on his catch.
He rapped upon the panels with his knuckles.
Aged and frail, granny is three-quarters succumbed to the mortality the ache in her bones promises her and almost ready to give in entirely. A boy came out from the village to build up her hearth for the night an hour ago and the kitchen crackles with busy firelight. She has her Bible for company, she is a pious old woman. She is propped up on several pillows in the bed set into the wall peasant-fashion, wrapped up in the patchwork quilt she made before she was married, more years ago than she cares to remember. Two china spaniels with liver-coloured blotches on their coats and black noses sit on either side of the fireplace. There is a bright rug of woven rags on the pantiles.[5] The grandfather clock ticks away her eroding time.
We keep the wolves outside by living well.
He rapped upon the panels with his hairy knuckles.
'It is your granddaughter,' he mimicked in a high soprano.
'Lift up the latch and walk in, my darling.'
You can tell them by their eyes, eyes of a beast of prey, nocturnal, devastating eyes as red as a wound; you can hurl your Bible at him and your apron after, granny, you thought that was a sure prophylactic[6] against these infernal vermin. . . now call on Christ and his mother and all the angels in heaven to protect you but it won't do you any good.
His feral, muzzle is sharp as a knife; he drops his golden burden of gnawed pheasant on the table and puts down your dear girl's basket, too. Oh, my God, what have you done with her?
Off with his disguise, that coat of forest-coloured cloth, the hat with the feather tucked into the ribbon; his matted hair streams down his white shirt and she can see the lice moving in it. The sticks in the hearth shift and hiss; night and the forest has come into the kitchen with darkness tangled in its hair.
He strips off his shirt. His skin is the colour and texture of vellum. A crisp stripe of hair runs down his belly, his nipples are ripe and dark as poison fruit but he's so thin you could count the ribs under his skin if only he gave you the time. He strips off his trousers and she can see how hairy his legs are. His genitals, huge. Ah! huge.

5 pantile: a heavy type of tile used for roofing and paving.
6 prophylactic: a protective measure, a precaution.

The last thing the old lady saw in all this world was a young man, eyes like cinders, naked as a stone, approaching her bed.
The wolf is carnivore incarnate.
When he had finished with her, he licked his chops and quickly dressed himself again, until he was just as he had been when he came through her door. He burned the inedible hair in the fireplace and wrapped the bones up in a napkin that he hid away under the bed in the wooden chest in which he found a clean pair of sheets. These he carefully put on the bed instead of the tell-tale stained ones he stowed away in the laundry basket. He plumped up the pillows and shook out the patchwork quilt, he picked up the Bible from the floor, closed it and laid it on the table. All was as it had been before except that grandmother was gone. The sticks twitched in the grate, the clock ticked and the young man sat patiently, deceitfully beside the bed in granny's nightcap.
Rat-a-tap-tap.
'Who's there?' he quavers in granny's antique falsetto.
'Only your granddaughter.'
So she came in, bringing with her a flurry of snow that melted in tears on the tiles, and perhaps she was a little disappointed to see only her grandmother sitting beside the fire. But then he flung off the blanket and sprang to the door, pressing his back against it so that she could not get out again.
The girl looked round the room and saw there was not even the indentation of a head on the smooth cheek of the pillow and how, for the first time she'd seen it so, the Bible lay closed on the table. The tick of the clock cracked like a whip. She wanted her knife from her basket but she did not dare reach for it because his eyes were fixed upon her – huge eyes that now seemed to shine with a unique, interior light, eyes the size of saucers, saucers full of Greek fire,[7] diabolic phosphorescence.
'What big eyes you have.'
'All the better to see you with.'
No trace at all of the old woman except for a tuft of white hair that had caught in the bark of an unburned log. When the girl saw that, she knew she was in danger of death.
'Where is my grandmother?'
'There's nobody here but we two, my darling.'
Now a great howling rose up all around them, near, very near, as close as the kitchen garden, the howling of a multitude of wolves; she knew the worst wolves are hairy on the inside and she shivered, in spite of the scarlet shawl she pulled more closely round herself as if it could protect her although it was as red as the blood she must spill.
'Who has come to sing us carols,' she said.
'Those are the voices of my brothers, darling; I love the company of wolves. Look out of the window and you'll see them.'
Snow half-caked the lattice and she opened it to look into the garden. It was a white night of moon and snow; the blizzard whirled round the gaunt, grey beasts who squatted on their haunches among the rows of winter cabbage, pointing their sharp snouts to the moon and howling as if their hearts would break. Ten wolves; twenty wolves – so many wolves she could not count them, howling in concert as if demented or deranged. Their eyes reflected the light from the kitchen and shone like a hundred candles.
'It is very cold, poor things,' she said; 'no wonder they howl so.'
She closed the window on the wolves' threnody[8] and took off her scarlet shawl, the colour of poppies, the colour of sacrifices, the colour of her menses, and, since her fear did her no good, she ceased to be afraid.
'What shall I do with my shawl?'

7 Greek fire: a liquid or semi-liquid incendiary weapon (part of a weapon system) used primarily in naval battles by the Byzantine Empire in the 7th – 11th centuries; its exact composition was a state secret and is today unknown.
8 threnody: a song of lamentation for the dead; a dirge.

'Throw it on the fire, dear one. You won't need it again.'
She bundled up her shawl and threw it on the blaze, which instantly consumed it. Then she drew her blouse over her head; her small breasts gleamed as if the snow had invaded the room.
'What shall I do with my blouse?'
'Into the fire with it, too, my pet.'
The thin muslin went flaring up the chimney like a magic bird and now off came her skirt, her woollen stockings, her shoes, and on to the fire they went, too, and were gone for good. The firelight shone through the edges of her skin; now she was clothed only in her untouched integument[9] of flesh. This dazzling, naked she combed out her hair with her fingers; her hair looked white as the snow outside. Then went directly to the man with red eyes in whose unkempt mane the lice moved; she stood up on tiptoe and unbuttoned the collar of his shirt.
'What big arms you have.'
'All the better to hug you with.'

Every wolf in the world now howled a prothalamion[10] outside the window as she freely gave the kiss she owed him.
'What big teeth you have!'
She saw how his jaw began to slaver and the room was full of the clamour of the forest's Liebestod[11] but the wise child never flinched, even when he answered:
'All the better to eat you with.'
The girl burst out laughing; she knew she was nobody's meat. She laughed at him full in the face, she ripped off his shirt for him and flung it into the fire, in the fiery wake of her own discarded clothing. The flames danced like dead souls on Walpurgisnacht[12] and the old bones under the bed set up a terrible clattering but she did not pay them any heed.
Carnivore incarnate, only immaculate flesh appeases him.
She will lay his fearful head on her lap and she will pick out the lice from his pelt and perhaps she will put die lice into her mouth and eat them, as he will bid her, as she would do in a savage marriage ceremony.
The blizzard will die down.
The blizzard died down, leaving the mountains as randomly covered with snow as if a blind woman had thrown a sheet over them, the upper branches of the forest pines limed, creaking, swollen with the fall.
Snowlight, moonlight, a confusion of paw-prints.
All silent, all still.
Midnight; and the clock strikes. It is Christmas Day, the werewolves' birthday, the door of the solstice stands wide open; let them all sink through.
See! sweet and sound she sleeps in granny's bed, between the paws of the tender wolf.

9 integument: a (natural) covering
10 prothalamion: song in celebration of a wedding
11 liebestod: in opera, primarily, a song sung by two lovers dying together
12 Walpurgisnacht: a European spring festival (night of April 30) associated with Saint Walpurga; also a pagan sabbath ceremony

THE WOLF AND THE FEMINIST: A CRITICAL READING OF ANGELA CARTER'S WOLF TRILOGY

Angela Carter's fiction has been a source of controversy among many critics. While some argue that her writing is feminist, others claim that her writing is anti-feminist and even sexist in its "representations of the physical abuse of women in phallocentric cultures" (Makinen 3). Carter's adaptations of traditional fairytales often present the readers with a sexualised, feminist angle. This can be said specifically of Angela Carter's **Wolf Trilogy**, "The Werewolf," "The Company of Wolves" and "Wolf-Alice," where the traditional message of Red Riding Hood as a warning to young girls is adapted to one with a feminist purpose. Although superficially the Wolf Trilogy appears to convey a feminist message, it can be seen that, between the lines, Carter merely rewrites the tales "within the strait-jacket of their original structure and therefore [reproduces] the rigidly sexist psychology of the erotic" (4). Thus, Angela Carter's Wolf Trilogy attempts to present its readers with strong female protagonists who use fearlessness or sexuality to remain free from patriarchal dominance. However, Carter ends up undermining her feminist purpose in the way she portrays her protagonists; this is done either by her engagement with patriarchal conventions, her objectification of women, and the portrayal of the traditional gender binary as something inherent rather than socially constructed.

The link between Carter's Wolf Trilogy and the traditional Red Riding Hood story, is imperative to understand. By comparing the portrayal of the protagonists and the purpose of the original story, one can draw some conclusions regarding how Carter attempts to write a feminist adaption. For example, **The Brothers Grimm's "Little Red Cap"** emphasises obedience to one's mother and it serves as a warning to young girls about strangers and the dangers of sex; Little Red Cap promises her mother that she will do everything right. Likewise, Perrault's version is a simple and straightforward warning to children against predators. Carter, however, deviates from these moralistic warnings, placing an emphasis on sexual freedom and the power of seduction. Carter attempts to portray a feminist protagonist who is independent of male dominance in each of her short Wolf stories. She further deviates from Grimm's version to underpin her feminist purpose in that there is no huntsman to save her heroine in "The Company of Wolves"; she deliberately omits the huntsman to emphasise that there is no need for a man to rescue a "damsel in distress." Through the comparison of the messages in both the traditional tale and Carter's adaptations, Carter attempts to highlight that women can be their own saviours.

Certainly, these views indicate Carter's feminist project in her rewriting of the tales. In "The Werewolf", Carter attempts to portray **a fearless female protagonist who is capable of defending herself** when faced with grave danger. Her mother requests that Red visits her sick grandmother, and gives her the means to defend herself should she encounter a wolf: "take your father's hunting knife, you know how to use

it" (Carter 127). The latter half of the quotation suggests that the girl has had experience defending herself with the knife. Carter attempts to show that the girl is not in need of rescue or protection from a man, such as the huntsman that appears in the Grimm's version. Furthermore, as the girl enters the woods, she is hunted by the wolf and it is at the point of hearing "the freezing howl of a wolf" (127) that she transforms from prey into predator, hunted into huntress as she "seized her knife and turned on the beast" (127). Carter attempts to portray a strong and fearless protagonist who "with her father's knife [slashes] off its right forepaw" (127). Carter depicts Red as taking control of the situation and defending herself to highlight female empowerment. She further emphasises this point in the last line of the story: "now the child lived in her grandmother's house; she prospered" (128). This suggests that the girl not only takes control and defeats the wolf, but she is also triumphant because she takes control of her own fate.

Although the quotations above appear to support a feminist reading of Carter's "The Werewolf," the way Carter represents this fearlessness or capability of self defense actually undermines the feminist reading. Firstly, although the girl is initially described as being able to defend herself, the knife she is provided with is her "father's hunting knife" (127). The knife belonging to her father suggests that she is still in need of her father's protection; this reaffirms the tradition of the father as the head of the family. Furthermore, Carter re-writes the depiction of the werewolf to highlight the beast's cowardice (Makinen 5). This creature is no longer strong and dangerous, but weak and vulnerable after his paw is chopped off: "the wolf let out a gulp, almost a sob, when it saw what had happened to it; wolves are less brave than they seem" (Carter 127). Carter describes the wolf as a less vicious foe who can easily be defeated; wolves are now considered weak and "less brave than they seem" (127) This rewriting of the wolf's characteristics undermines the fearlessness of the protagonist's action.

Secondly, Carter attempts to portray an empowered female protagonist by depicting Red Riding Hood as capable of self-defense without a man's help. This is illustrated by Red when she discovers the identity of the werewolf to be her grandmother; Red then kills and defeats the werewolf living "happily ever after" without a man. However, Carter's choice to combine the characters of the grandmother and the werewolf serves to highlight that women not only need to defend themselves against male dominance but also against fellow women who can present themselves as dangerous. There is no textual evidence in "The Werewolf" to suggest any sense of remorse on Red's part for causing the death of her grandmother. Instead she thrives off her grandmother's possessions; Red takes what belongs to another woman and claims it as her own. It therefore can be argued that positing women as dangers to each other and as prospering at the expense of another, undermines the feminist understanding of the story. It positions woman against woman, and distracts from the important message of fighting male dominance.

Another way Carter attempts to present a strong, independent heroine is by depicting the protagonist as comfortable with her sexuality in **"The Company of Wolves."** The protagonist in Carter's story is represented as a mature heroine; she is still young but she is also highly sexualised as "her breasts have just begun to swell" (Carter 133) and she still has an innocent desirability in that "she stands and moves within the invisible pentacle of her own virginity" (133). Not only is her initial introduction highly sexualised but the same can be said for her behaviour. When the young girl is confronted by the handsome man in the woods and a wager is made, she converses in a flirtatious manner asking "disingenuously" (135) what the stranger would like should he win the bet. Thus, Carter portrays her protagonist as a young girl who is going through puberty and recognising and taking control of her own sexuality. Carter intends for this sexuality to not only be expressed in a mild flirtation with a handsome stranger, but for it also to be used as a means to take control of her situation and be her own rescuer. When faced with what she believed would be her demise, for she "knew she was in danger of death" (137), she takes control rather than giving in to fear. This is where Carter highlights Red's transition from a young girl who is afraid by taking "off her scarlet shawl [. . .] the colour of her menses" (138), into a woman who has gone through puberty and now at the peak of her sexuality. The young girl realises that since "her fear did no good, she ceased to be afraid" (138). Carter describes the process of the girl stripping and seducing the wolf: she removes her blouse to reveal "her small breasts" until she was "clothed only in her untouched integument of flesh" (138). Carter uses sexuality to highlight that the heroine makes the decision to control her own fate instead of succumbing to fear and becoming the wolf's prey. Like in "The Werewolf," she transforms from prey to predator by taking control.

Although the initial reading of "The Company of Wolves" attempts to portray a strong female protagonist who uses sexuality to obtain freedom from male dominance, a closer reading of the way Carter does this will highlight how the story actually results in female objectification. The initial introduction and description of the heroine is described by Kimberly Lau as one of the "conventional pornographic tropes surrounding the sexually desirable young girl" (85). This therefore supports the argument that the sexualisation that is meant to be representative of de-victimising herself and taking control actually plays into a male fantasy and does not depict female empowerment. Likewise, when flirting with the handsome stranger, Lau states that Red is aware of her innocent flirtation, which is exactly what makes her so highly desirable in the "typical male fantasy" (86). These conventions of sexualising the heroine support patriarchal expectations of sexuality. Sexuality becomes the only means of control and therefore, her only means of self-defense. This sexualisation of the tale is in "accord with the heterosexual male pedophilic fantasies about sexually precocious young girls" and a "cultural fetishization of young girls and the sexualisation of women" (Lau 80). Furthermore, the fact that she

ends up "sweet and sound [sleeping] . . . between the paws of the tender wolf" (139) implies that she is only safe when between the arms of a male figure; the protagonist is not depicted as strong and independent as she still depends on a man for safety. It can also be said that Carter rewrites the characteristics of the wolf as she did in "The Werewolf." Here the wolf is described as "tender" going against the typical description of a vicious predator. The rewriting of the wolf as "tender" results in Red Riding Hood not being in danger to begin with. It can be said that the young and highly sexualised girl does not free herself from danger through any form of self defense or through sexuality, but rather she succumbs to a male fantasy as she sleeps safely with the tender wolf.

Finally, in contrast to the "The Werewolf" Carter separates the characters of the wolf and the grandmother, which serves to undermine the feminist reading. According to Bacchilega (62) the separation of grandmother and wolf is done to add emphasis to the sexual relationship of the girl with the wolf. This narrative choice further undermines Carter's feminist purpose. Although this time Red did not directly kill her grandmother, another woman, she still shows no concern for her grandmother's death. The werewolf has eaten her grandmother and upon hearing "the old bones under the bed [. . .] she did not pay them any heed" (138), the girl continues to seduce the wolf. Some critics argue that the grandmother represents old-fashioned, sexual values. However, regardless of the grandmother's purpose, the fact that Red shows no concern for her grandmother's death only emphasises the rivalry between Red and her grandmother. Just like in "The Werewolf," Red takes possession of her grandmother's house as she "sleeps in granny's bed" (139) thriving off what belongs to another woman. There is a rivalry between the women and an emphasis on a sexual relationship as more important than the death of another woman; thus, as a result, the feminist reading is again undermined.

"Wolf-Alice," the final story in Carter's Wolf Trilogy, also attempts to portray a strong female protagonist, but again, the way in which this is done **undermines this feminist purpose as the story conforms to the gender binary**. Although Carter attempts to present a feminist reading by breaking down gender conventions of Wolf-Alice, she in fact portrays gender as something essential. Wolf-Alice grew up a feral child and so society had no influence on her, implying that Carter depicts gender as an essential and inherent trait, not something learnt or constructed. This can be seen firstly when she "began to bleed" (Carter 144), to menstruate, making a step toward becoming a woman. Rabab Al-Kassasbeh argues when Alice wants to clean up her blood her "feeling of shame can be explained by the fact that she has internalized the dominant culture" (32). Some have argued that this shame is a result of the nuns, who represent religion or society attempting to shape her to adhere to traditional gender roles and being embarrassed by her puberty. However, this is not the case. The story specifically mentions that "the nuns had not the means to inform her how it should be, it was not fastidiousness but shame that made her do so" (144). Therefore, these

responses of shame are represented as something inherent and natural. This suggests that Carter merely emphasises that gender and shame of female sexuality is something inherent and not learned from society, thus undermining the feminist reading and supporting traditional gender roles. Furthermore, Wolf-Alice conforms to society's gender expectations when she begins to wear dresses. She eventually finds and puts on the wedding dress and "saw how this white dress made her shine" (Carter 147). This acceptance of clothing "represents a parody of the socialization of the heroine [. . .] assimilating the cultural stereotype of what costume is appropriate for her gender" (Al-Kassasbeh 33). Again, the fact that Wolf-Alice accepts all these conventions of her own accord shows how Carter unintentionally plays into societal expectations of women and gender, thus undermining the feminist purpose. Carter's representation of Wolf-Alice also unintentionally adheres to patriarchal traditions. This is exemplified in the fact that Wolf-Alice acts as the Duke's maid, who himself is a werewolf and a symbol of patriarchal order. Wolf-Alice "can perform the few, small tasks [. . .] she sweeps up the hairs, makes up his bed at sunset" (143); furthermore, she does this while he is out hunting in the graveyards. This further underpins the patriarchal tradition of the woman staying home to do chores while the man serves as the provider bringing home the food. The final way in which Carter adheres to patriarchal traditions is depicted in the way Alice pities the Duke. After the Duke is shot, "he lies writhing on his black bed" (Carter 148), Lau describes Alice's response as "both tender and erotic" (91). It is in this moment that the "two appear much like the newly wedded couple we might expect in a happy ending" (Jennings 105), as Alice leaps "upon his bed to lick [. . .] without disgust, with quick tender gravity" (Carter 148) the Duke's wound. The symbol of the wedding dress as her sexual purity becomes "contaminated by the open and loving exchange of bodily fluids, the saliva commingling with blood and dirt" (Jennings 106). Once again the protagonist is sexualised, but this time not to save herself, but the Duke. These final images of Alice bent over the Duke in an erotic way "ironically enact the prototypical, hetreosexual fairy-tale ending" (105). Not only is Wolf-Alice ashamed of her sexuality and defined by society's expectations of gender, but her happy ending is only achievable with a man and the traditional fairy-tale ending (106). Both of these elements undermine the feminist purpose of an independent heroine.

Overall, feminism influences Carter's *Wolf Trilogy*. The sexualisation of protagonists is a technique Carter uses to highlight female empowerment and freedom from male dominance. However, the analysis above clearly highlights the ways in which Carter's methods and portrayal undermine her feminist purpose. The oversexualisation of the young female protagonists only serves to play into male fantasies and does not result in female empowerment, but rather in objectification of young girls. Carter's Wolf Trilogy is "locked into the conservative sexism, despite her good intentions" (Makinen 4), with patriarchy still featuring as an underlying force in her writing.

Red Riding Hood

In the stories you have just read you will have noticed that the girl is called by different names. But in the descriptions of the different versions that follow she is always referred to as Red Riding Hood and the animal is always referred to as the wolf.

Read through the descriptions and see if you can match them to the versions of *Red Riding Hood* that you have just read.
You should be able to explain your decisions by giving examples from the different versions.

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a. This *Red Riding Hood* was written by Perrault in 1697. It was written for upper class readers in France and it shows how adults of that class thought about children as quite different from themselves. This was unlike the view held by parents of the peasant class at that time, where children were seen as young adults whose work was very important to help the family survive.

The little girl in Perrault's version doesn't seem capable of being much help to anyone — not even herself. She is punished not because of her helplessness however, but because she behaves very badly by talking to a stranger.

The language of the story is more formal and the improper or rude bits have been left out, because polite, young upper class girls should not read or hear about such vulgar things.

b. This version was written by women in Liverpool in 1972. They wanted to show that Little Red Riding Hood could be brave and capable, but they also show that this is not always easy. The wolf is presented as very frightening and a very real danger to Red Riding Hood and her grandmother.

In the end the two women defeat the wolf together but first, Red Riding Hood has to overcome her own fears and to learn that she can be independent and rely on her own strength and abilities.

c. This version of *Red Riding Hood* is probably closest to the way the story would have been told before it was written down. It would have been told by storytellers to ordinary people, young and old — villagers, farm workers and peasants — for entertainment. So although a warning is given in it to children to beware of strangers, the main aim is not to teach them right from wrong or how 'nice' children should behave. In fact there are some quite gruesome details in the story and at times the language is not very polite.

Red Riding Hood herself is independent, cheerful and self-reliant, which is probably how the children listening to the story were expected to be. From an early age they would have been working quite hard to help support their families.

d. This version was written in the nineteenth century by the Brothers Grimm. The story is made sweeter and nicer for children to read. The moral lesson is clear, but so that children reading it won't be upset by a violent ending, the heroine is given another chance to think about how nice young girls should behave.

Although the story still has the purpose of warning children about strangers, it also provides a model of good behaviour and manners for young ladies. Red Riding Hood in this version is pretty, sweet, lovable, obedient, nervous and far from quick-witted.

e. This version was written in 1939 by James Thurber. In it he sets out to make fun of the earlier very 'proper' stories of *Red Riding Hood*. He does this by making the reader laugh at the most unlikely part of the story: the wolf disguising himself as the grandmother and completely fooling Red Riding Hood. In Thurber's story she is not tricked for a minute, and takes very direct action against the wolf.

Red Riding Hood

FOR WRITING

The five versions of *Red Riding Hood* that you have just read are in order from the earliest to the most modern.

Which version did you like best and why?

Look at the notes you made on each of the stories and write about the way *Red Riding Hood* has changed over the years, and why you think the changes have occurred.

The Collectors

Writers did change stories to suit the ideas around at their time, but this is not the only reason that the early written-down versions of fairy stories and folk tales so often seem to be about girls who are weak and silly, and about boys who are brave and adventurous.

This is what one writer has to say:

In the fairy tales we know best today, the heroes seem to have all the interesting adventures. They get to kill dragons and outwit giants and rescue princesses and find the magic treasure. As for the heroines, things just happen to them: they are persecuted by wicked stepmothers, eaten by wolves, or fall asleep for a hundred years. All most of them ever seem to do is wait patiently for the right prince to come, or for someone else to rescue them from dangers and enchantments. This has made some people say that modern children ought not to read fairy tales, because they will get the idea that girls are supposed to be beautiful and good and helpless and dull.

But there are thousands of folktales in the world that are not at all like this. They have heroines who can fight and hunt as well as any man, heroines who defeat giants, answer riddles, outwit the Devil, and rescue their friends and relatives from all sorts of dangers and evil spells. They are not only beautiful and good, but also strong, brave, clever, and resourceful.

Why don't we know these stories as well as the others? It is because the first collections of fairy tales for children were put together over a hundred years ago, when women and girls were supposed to be weak and helpless; and the editors who picked the stories out of the many that were available chose ones like *Snow White, Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty,* and *Little Red Riding-Hood.* These tales were printed over and over again, while the rest were almost forgotten.

Most of the editors who chose these stories were men. The original tellers of folktales, on the other hand, were mainly women. And they were not frail Victorian ladies, but working women: farmers' wives, shopkeepers, craftswomen, household servants, children's nurses, and midwives. They lived active, interesting lives, and the stories they told show it.

Alison Lurie

Red Riding Hood
1

There was a woman who had made some bread. She said to her daughter, "Go carry this hot loaf and a bottle of milk to your granny."

So the little girl departed. At the crossway she met *bzou*, the werewolf, who said to her,

"Where are you going?"

"I'm taking this hot loaf and a bottle of milk to my granny."

"What path are you taking?", said the werewolf, "the path of needles or the path of pins?".

"The path of needles," the little girl said.

"All right, then I'll take the path of pins".

The little girl entertained herself by gathering needles. Meanwhile the werewolf arrived at the grandmother's house, killed her, put some of her meat in the cupboard and a bottle of blood on the shelf. The little girl arrived and knocked at the door.

"Push the door," said the werewolf, "it's barred by a piece of wet straw."

"Good day, granny, I've brought you a hot loaf and a bottle of milk."

"Put it in the cupboard, my child. Take some of the meat which is inside and the bottle of wine on the shelf."

"Undress yourself, my child," the werewolf said, "and come lie

down beside me."

"Where should I put my apron?"

"Throw it into the fire, my child, you won't be needing it anymore."

When she laid herself down in the bed, the little girl said,

"Oh, Granny, how hairy you are!"

"The better to keep myself warm, my child!"

"Oh, Granny, what big nails you have!"

"The better to scratch myself with, my child!"

"Oh, Granny, what big shoulders you have!"

"The better to carry the firewood, my child!"

"Oh, Granny, what big ears you have!"

"The better to hear you with, my child!"

"Oh, Granny, what big nostrils you have!"

"The better to snuff my tobacco with, my child!"

"Oh, Granny, what a big mouth you have!"

"The better to eat you with, my child!"

"Oh, Granny, I've got to go badly. Let me go outside."

"Do it in the bed, my child!"

"Oh, no, I want to go outside."

"All right, but make it quick."

The werewolf attached a woollen rope to her foot and let her go outside.

When the little girl was outside, she tied the end of the rope to a plum tree in the courtyard. The werewolf became impatient and said, "Are you making a load out there? Are you making a load?"

When he realized that nobody was answering him, he jumped out of bed and saw that the little girl had escaped. He followed her but arrived at her house just at the moment she entered.

Red Riding Hood 2

Once upon a time there was a little village girl, the prettiest that had ever been seen. Her mother doted on her, and her grandmother even more. This good woman made her a little red hood which suited her so well that she was called Little Red Riding Hood wherever she went.

One day, after her mother had baked some biscuits, she said to Little Red Riding Hood, "Go see how your grandmother is feeling, for I have heard that she is sick. Take her some biscuits and this small pot of butter." Little Red Riding Hood departed at once to visit her grandmother, who lived in another village. In passing through a wood she met old neighbour wolf, who had a great desire to eat her. But he did not dare because of some woodcutters who were in the forest. He asked her where she was going. The poor child, who did not know that it is dangerous to stop and listen to a wolf, said to him, "I am going to see my grandmother, and I am bringing some biscuits with a small pot of butter which my mother has sent her."

"Does she live far from here?" asked the wolf.

"Oh, yes!" said Little Red Riding Hood. "You must pass the mill which you can see right over there, and hers is the first house in the village."

"Well, then," said the wolf. "I want to go and see her, too. I'll take this path here, and you take that path there, and we'll see who'll get there first."

The wolf began to run as fast as he could on the path which was

shorter, and the little girl took the longer path, and she enjoyed herself by gathering nuts, running after butterflies, and making bouquets of small flowers which she found. It did not take the wolf long to arrive at the grandmother's house, He knocked: Toc, toc.

"Who's there?"

"It's your granddaughter, Little Red Riding Hood," said the wolf, disguising his voice, "I've brought you some biscuits and a little pot of butter which my mother has sent you."

The good grandmother, who was in her bed because she was not feeling well, cried out to him, "Pull the bobbin, and the latch will fall."

The wolf pulled the bobbin, and the door opened. He threw himself upon the good woman and devoured her quicker than a wink, for it had been more than three days since he had last eaten. After that he closed the door and lay down in the grandmother's bed to wait for Little Red Riding Hood, who after a while came knocking at the door. Toc, toc.

"Who's there?"

When she heard the gruff voice of the wolf, Little Red Riding Hood was scared at first, but, believing that her grandmother had a cold, she responded, "It's your granddaughter, Little Red Riding Hood. I've brought you some biscuits and a little pot of butter which my mother has sent you."

The wolf softened his voice and cried out to her, "Pull the bobbin, and the latch will fall."

Little Red Riding Hood pulled the bobbin, and the door opened.

Upon seeing her enter, the wolf hid himself under the bedcovers and said to her, "Put the biscuits and the pot of butter on the bin and come lie down beside me."

Little Red Riding Hood undressed and went to get into bed, where she was quite astonished to see the way her grandmother was dressed in her nightgown. She said to her: "What big arms you have, grandmother!"

"The better to hug you with, my child."

"What big legs you have, grandmother!"

"The better to run with, my child."

"What big ears you have, grandmother!"

"The better to hear you with, my child."

"What big eyes you have, grandmother!"

"The better to see you with, my child."

"What big teeth you have, grandmother!"

"The better to eat you."

And upon saying these words, the wicked wolf threw himself upon Little Red Riding Hood and ate her up.

Red Riding Hood
3

Once upon a time there was a sweet little maiden. Whoever laid eyes upon her could not help but love her. But it was her grandmother who loved her most. She could never give the child enough. One time she made a present, a small, red velvet cap, and, since it was so becoming, she always wanted to wear only this. So she was simply called Little Red Cap.

One day her mother said to her, "Come, Little Red Cap, take this piece of cake and a bottle of wine and bring them to your grandmother. She is sick and weak. This will strengthen her. Be nice and good, and give her my regards. Don't tarry on your way, and don't stray from the path, otherwise you'll fall and break the glass. Then your sick grandmother will get nothing."

Little Red Cap promised her mother to be very obedient. Well, the grandmother lived out in the woods, half an hour from the village. And, as soon as Little Red Cap entered the woods, she encountered the wolf. However, Little Red Cap did not know what a wicked sort of an animal he was and was not afraid of him.

"Good day, Little Red Cap."

"Thank you kindly, wolf."

"Where are you going so early, Little Red Cap?"

"To Grandmother's."

"What are you carrying under your apron?"

"My grandmother is sick and weak, so I'm bringing her cake and

wine. We baked yesterday, and this will strengthen her."

"Where does your grandmother live, Little Red Cap?"

"Another quarter of an hour from here in the woods. Her house is under the three big oak trees. You can tell it by the hazel bushes," said Little Red Cap.

The wolf thought to himself, this is a good juicy morsel for me. How are you going to manage to get her?"

"Listen, Little Red Cap," he said, "have you seen the pretty flowers which are in the woods? Why don't you look around you? I believe that you haven't even noticed how lovely the birds are singing. You march along as if you were going straight to school in the village, and it is so delightful out here in the woods."

Little Red Cap looked around and saw how the sun had broken through the trees and everything around her was filled with beautiful flowers. So she thought to herself: Well, if I were to bring grandmother a bunch of flowers, she would like that. It's still early, and I'll arrive on time. So she plunged into the woods and looked for flowers. And each time she plucked one, she believed she saw another one even prettier and ran after it further and further into the woods. But the wolf went straight to the grandmother's house and knocked at the door.

"Who's there outside?"

"Little Red Cap. I'm bringing you cake and wine. Open up."

"Just lift the latch," the grandmother called. "I'm too weak and can't get up."

The wolf lifted the latch, and the door sprung open. Then he went straight inside to the grandmother's bed and swallowed her. Next he took her clothes, put them on with her nightcap, lay down in her bed, and drew the curtains.

Little Red Cap had been running around after flowers, and, only when she had as many as she could carry, did she continue on her way to her grandmother. Upon arriving there she found the door open. This puzzled her, and, as she entered the room, it seemed so strange inside that she thought, Oh, oh, my God, how frightened I feel today, and usually I like to be at grandmother's. Whereupon she went to the bed and drew back the curtains. Her grandmother lay there with her cap pulled down over her face so that it gave her a strange appearance.

"Oh, grandmother, what big ears you have!"

"The better to hear you with."

"Oh, grandmother, what big eyes you have!"

"The better to see you with."

"Oh, grandmother, what big hands you have!"
"The better to grab you with."
"Oh, grandmother, what a terrible big mouth you have!"
"The better to eat you with."

With that the wolf jumped out of bed, leapt on Little Red Cap and swallowed her. After the wolf had digested the juicy morsel, he lay down in bed again, fell asleep, and began to snore very loudly. The hunter happened to be passing by and wondered to himself about the old lady's snoring, You had better take a look. Then he went inside, and, when he came to the bed, he found the wolf whom he had been hunting for a long time. He had certainly eaten the grandmother. Perhaps she can still be saved. I won't shoot, thought the hunter. Then he took a shearing knife and slit the wolf's belly open, and, after he had made a couple of cuts, he saw the glowing red cap, and, after he made a few more cuts, the girl jumped out and cried, "Oh, how frightened I was! It was so dark in the wolf's body." And then the grandmother came out alive. So now Little Red Cap fetched large heavy stones with which they filled the wolf's body, and, when he awoke, he wanted to jump up, but the stones were so heavy that he fell down dead.

So all three were pleased. The hunter skinned the fur from the wolf. The grandmother ate the cake and drank the wine that Little Red Cap had brought, and Little Red Cap thought to herself: Never again in your life will you stray by yourself in the woods when your mother has forbidden it.

Red Riding Hood 4

One afternoon a big wolf waited in a dark forest for a little girl to come along carrying a basket of food to her grandmother. Finally a little girl did come along and she was carrying a basket of food. "Are you carrying that basket to your grandmother?" asked the wolf. The little girl says yes, she was. So the wolf asked her where her grandmother lived and the little girl told him and he disappeared into the wood.

When the little girl opened the door of her grandmother's house she saw that there was somebody in bed with a nightcap on. She had approached no nearer than twenty-five feet from the bed when she saw that it was not her grandmother but the wolf, for even in a nightcap a wolf does not look any more like your grandmother than the Metro-Goldwyn lion looks like Calvin Coolidge. So the little girl took an automatic out of her basket and shot the wolf dead.

Moral: It is not so easy to fool little girls nowadays as it used to be.

Red Riding Hood
5

In the far north, beside a river which froze hard as rock in the dark days of winter, there stood a great timber mill and a town built out of wood. The wood came from the trees of the deep forest which surrounded the town and stretched into the far distance.

In this town lived a quiet and shy little girl, called Red Riding Hood. Her real name was Nadia but everyone called her Red Riding Hood because when the cold came she always wore a thick red cloak with a hood. It had been given to her by her great-grandmother who had worn it herself, long ago, when she was a child.

Her great-grandmother still lived in a cottage in the forest and Red Riding Hood loved to visit her more than anything in the world; but she would never go alone because she was frightened to walk through the forest.

Red Riding Hood was frightened of many things. She was frightened of going up to bed by herself, she was frightened of dogs and of thunder and of people she did not know. But she was most frightened of the forest. The forest seemed strange to her for she had been born far away in a city in the south, where her mother and father had gone to be trained for their work in the great timber mill.

"Why do you never play in the forest like we did when we were children?" they asked her.

"It is dark under the trees," said Red Riding Hood, "and in

winter the wolves howl in the distance."

"There have been no wolves in the forest since anyone can remember," said her parents, laughing.

But her great-grandmother took the child to one side and said to her quietly, "Not everyone can hear that howling; they think it is only the wind in the trees. One winter day when I was a girl, out alone chopping wood for the stove, I was attacked by one of the grey wolves which speak."

"Oh, great-grandmother!" whispered Red Riding Hood. "What did you do?"

"I fought the wolf with my hatchet and killed it." replied the old woman, "for I was strong and agile when I was young."

But now the great-grandmother was very old and frail, and almost every day when school and work were over, Red Riding Hood went with her mother and father, or with some of the other children, to cook supper for her and to sit and talk.

Winter was coming. Snow fell. It was dark before the children came out of school and the wind grew icy cold.

In the school the children were hard at work finishing the fur jackets which they had been making to wear during the bitter weather. They were very proud of these jackets, for all of them had cut out their own with great sharp knives and were sewing pieces together with special strong needles and thread. Only Red Riding Hood was not making a jacket. She wanted to wear her red cloak and hood and besides she was frightened that she might cut herself on one of the sharp knives.

Her mother and father worried that she would be cold without a jacket, for the red cloak was growing worn..

"We can see to that," said the great-grandmother, as they all sat around her stove one evening. "Bring the special sewing things with you after school tomorrow and I will help you make a sheepskin lining for your cloak."

"What a good idea," said Red Riding Hood's parents and Red Riding Hood thought happily about tomorrow as she walked home between them through the forest.

"Why don't you take some presents to great-grandmother?" said the father the next morning. "Here are some brown eggs and some chocolate and a pot of the blackberry jam you helped us make." "We shall be busy this evening," said her mother, "but you can easily walk to great-grandmother's on your

own. The path through the forest is cleared of snow every day and there will be a full moon tonight."

Red Riding Hood said nothing. She took a basket and carefully put into it the eggs, the chocolate and the jam. She did not feel happy any more. The other children were going to stay late at school to finish their jackets. She would have to walk through the forest to her great-grandmother's cottage all alone.

Red Riding Hood was frightened. All day at school she could think about nothing but whether she dared to walk through the forest alone. At dinnertime she did not want to eat because she felt sick. She borrowed a special needle and thread and a sharp knife and put them in the basket with the presents, but when school was over she did not set out for her great-grandmother's, although she was longing to see her. She turned her back on the forest and started to walk into the town towards home.

It was dark and quiet outside the school. The other children were still inside sewing their jackets. In the distance Red Riding Hood could hear the noise of sawing from the timber mill. Then she heard another sound, from quite close, somewhere near the edge of the forest. It was the howling of a wolf.

Red Riding Hood stood listening. She knew it was one of the grey wolves. But who would believe her? They would laugh and say she had imagined it. She thought of her great-grandmother, all alone.

What if a wolf had come again for her now that she was no longer young and agile? Red Riding Hood turned around and ran into the forest and along the path to the old woman's cottage.

She ran and ran until her side hurt and her heart thumped so fast she had to stop to get some breath.

The moon shone through the bare branches of the trees onto the snow and the frozen earth. It was very still. Then a gust of wind blew snow into the air and through the wind Red Riding Hood thought she heard a cold voice calling, "Run home, little girl, run home. This is the night of the wolf."

Then she heard a low growl, and staring through the flurry of snow she saw a streak of grey moving toward great-grandmother's cottage.

Her mouth went dry and her legs felt as if she could not move them, but she made them walk on until at last she reached the cottage.

"Great-grandmother, great-grandmother!" she cried, rattling the door latch. "I'm here!"

"Lift up the latch and walk in," called a thin and quavering voice.

"Great-grandmother, are you ill?" cried little Red Riding Hood, and she opened the door and ran into the bedroom.

In the high, wooden bed there was a shape huddled down under the bedclothes. It was hard to see with only the moonlight coming through the window. Red Riding Hood peered at the shape and moved closer to the bed.

"What big eyes you have, great-grandmother," she said.

"All the better to see with, my dear," said the thin, quavering voice.

"And what big ears you have, great-grandmother."

"All the better to hear you with, my dear," said the voice.

"And what a strange nose you have, great-grandmother," said Red Riding Hood, moving a little closer.

"All the better to smell you with, my dear," said the voice, and Red Riding Hood could see a mouth full of yellow pointed teeth.

"And what big teeth you have!" she cried, backing away.

"All the better to eat you with!" snarled the shape, leaping from the bed. It was a grey wolf.

Red Riding Hood screamed and as she screamed she heard her great-grandmother calling. "Quick, child, quick! Let me in!"

Red Riding Hood flung open the door into the kitchen and there was her great-grandmother pulling a blazing branch from the stove. With this branch she advanced on the growling wolf, old and bent though she was.

The wolf was frightened by the flame. It circled fiercely around the old woman, trying to get behind her and spring on her. Red Riding Hood shrank back against the wall. She could see that soon the branch would be burnt out and then the wolf would spring on her great-grandmother. Suddenly she remembered how easily the other children had cut through skins to make their jackets. She reached into her basket and pulled out the great sharp knife. Just as the branch burnt out and the wolf gathered itself for the kill, Red Riding Hood leapt forward and plunged the knife deep into its heart. The wolf gave one terrifying snarl and fell dead on the ground in a pool of blood.

With the help of her great-grandmother Red Riding Hood skinned the wolf and together they made a lining of its fur. "Listen, great-granddaughter," said the old woman, as they worked together stitching the lining into the red cloak, "this cloak now has special powers. Whenever you meet another child who is shy and timid, lend that child the cloak to wear as you play together in the forest, and then, like you, they will grow brave."

So whenever she met such a child, Red Riding Hood did as her great-grandmother had said, but the rest of the time she wore the cloak herself and for many years it kept her warm as she explored deeper and deeper into the great forest.

ANALYSIS OF SHORT STORIES

	Little Red Riding Hood 1
Explore ways you are positioned to respond to the ideas in this text.	
Discuss how the values of the individual or groups are portrayed in this text.	

	Little Red Riding Hood 2
Explore ways you are positioned to respond to the ideas in this text.	
Discuss how the values of the individual or groups are portrayed in this text.	

	Little Red Riding Hood 3
Explore ways you are positioned to respond to the ideas in this text.	
Discuss how the values of the individual or groups are portrayed in this text.	

	Little Red Riding Hood 4
Explore ways you are positioned to respond to the ideas in this text.	
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	Little Red Riding Hood 5
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