

1. Find out something about the writer's biography. How might the writer's life and experiences have contributed to the substance of the story?
 - He was single
 - adopted a daughter that died of TB
 - was going to be a lawyer, but decided to become a writer after he no longer had to run the family business.
 - Rip van winkle was inspired by german folktales
2. Find out what was going on in the United States at the time of the story's publication: historically, politically, socially, culturally. In what ways does the story reflect its time?
 - The American Revolution (end of it)
 - The formation of the United States
 - the story is quite literally about how Rip Van Winkle "travels" through time
3. Pay attention to patterns of imagery, metaphor, allusion, foreshadowing, dramatic irony, and other literary techniques.
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