

THE WOLF OF CAPE FEN

BY JULIANA BRANDT

READERS GUIDE



The Wolf of Cape Fen was not always titled *The Wolf of Cape Fen*. If you had to choose a different title for the book, what would you choose and why? Use details from the text when explaining your answer.

Summarize *The Wolf of Cape Fen* using examples from the text. What do you believe is the most important message that can be learned from the story?

The following three themes can be found in *The Wolf of Cape Fen*.

Choose one and determine where it is demonstrated in the text. **Do you believe these statements about human nature to be true? Why or why not?**

- Dreaming: *Our dreams save us from the bad parts of the world.*
- Deals / Bargains with the Devil: *Devils may be all-powerful, but they have flaws and those flaws can be used to defeat them.*
- Power, where it comes from and who can wield it: *Young people have the power to change the world for the better.*

Extension: Choose one statement above and summarize how it develops over the course of the text.

Listed below are a few of the important parts of the story for Eliza:

- When the Wolf first attacks Winnie.
- When she visits Mrs. Chess.
- When she first plays cards with Baron Dire.

These experiences, among others, helped her gain the necessary skills, information, and tools to defeat Baron Dire. Choose one moment in *The Wolf of Cape Fen* that you believe to be the most important experience for Eliza. **Summarize what she learned that helped her defeat the Baron.**

Eliza's underlying moral code and her deep, unwavering love for Winnie guides her throughout the story. **Provide examples of the ways in which Eliza shows her dedication to her sister, despite the dangers posed throughout the story.**

Devil-like characters in literature are often all-powerful but deeply flawed. **Analyze Baron Dire's character.** How is he all-powerful? How is he flawed? How do these two traits form his personality? How do they affect his ability to form relationships and perform magic for the community of Cape Fen? *Extension: Read the Norwegian Folktale "The Boy and the Devil", watch the story of "The Soldier and Lord Death - The Storyteller" by the Jim Henson Company, and read the song lyrics of Dire Wolf by the Grateful Dead. All three of these stories of devil-like characters influenced The Wolf of Cape Fen as it was being written. How do you see these tales reflected in The Wolf of Cape Fen?*



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Describe how Eliza's relationship with Filemon changes throughout the story. What is the significance of this relationship, and how does their friendship help Eliza in the end?

Family is very important in *The Wolf of Cape Fen*. Even though this is the case, the Serling family keeps secrets and doesn't communicate with one another. Identify one of these secrets. How does it change the story and characters when the truth comes out?

On the following chart, describe how the characters view the Wolf, then write a paragraph comparing the similarities and differences.

ELIZA	WINNIE	BARON DIRE

The following literary devices can be found in *The Wolf of Cape Fen*. Find an example of each and explain what is being compared and/or the visual effect the description has.

	QUOTE	EXPLANATION
Personification		
Alliteration		
Metaphor		
Simile		

Extension: How does the figurative language used in The Wolf of Cape Fen impact meaning and tone?



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One of the major metaphors in *The Wolf of Cape Fen* is the magic system.

Baron Dire's magic takes animal traits and gives them to humans as a way to satisfy their internal dreams. Examples: Colby is fearful of her father and gets a snake's heat-sensing vision to be able to track him better. Lionel is prideful of his appearance and receives hair that changes color with the season. Sheriff Olavi desperately wants to find the Wolf and has a dolphin's ability to never sleep so she can spend more time hunting. **Choose one of your own dreams and find an animal trait that aligns with it. Do one of the following:**

1. Write a short story of what it would be like to live with that trait.
2. Create a visual art project of the animal and you.
3. Make a collage of pictures and symbols of things the trait would allow you to do, including ways the trait may be difficult to live with.

The Wolf of Cape Fen is broken into three parts. **For each section, answer the following questions:**

1. What is the title at the start of the section, and why does it fit with the events that follow?
2. What characters do we meet?
3. What major events happen, and what clues does Eliza gather?
4. What mysteries are introduced and are they solved?

Extension: Why do you believe the author chose to use a three-part structure?

The epigraphs at the start of each chapter in *The Wolf of Cape Fen* do not alter or influence the story itself, but they do provide insights into the inner dreams of each of the primary and secondary characters. **Choose one epigraph and analyze, tying it to a specific character.** What does the epigraph tell you about the character that is not explicitly stated elsewhere in the text?

The Wolf of Cape Fen is written from Eliza's point-of-view. At one time, there were scenes written from the points-of-view from other characters. Some of these scenes include:

- a. In chapter 9, Eliza watches Winnie jump from a tree. This scene was once written from Winnie's point-of-view.
- b. In chapter 10, Zilpha finds Eliza, Winnie, and Filemon hiding from the Wolf. This was once written from Zilpha's point-of-view.
- c. In chapter 20, Pa runs after Sheriff Olavi who runs after the Wolf with her shotgun. This scene was once written from Pa's point-of-view.



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READERS GUIDE



Consider the following questions for one of the scenes above: What parts of the scene do you think stayed the same when being written from Eliza's point-of-view? What do you think changed? How does this scene being written from Eliza's point-of-view impact the way the story is told? Why do you think the author decided to write this scene from Eliza's point-of-view instead?

Choose a scene from *The Wolf of Cape Fen* and write it from the point-of-view of a character of your choice.

The Wolf of Cape Fen has a map at the beginning of the book. How did this map influence your reading of the story? Did you use it while reading, and was it helpful? *Extension: Choose one location on the map not described in the text and do one of the following:*

- Write a short story or description of it.*
- Create a collage of images or symbols from a location.*
- Focus on a location and draw or paint it.*
- Take a picture of an image that reminds you of a location on Cape Fen and write a paragraph explaining the connection.*

Examine the location of Cape Fen. Choose three characters and find evidence of how their forced isolation on the Cape has affected them.

The Wolf of Cape Fen has illustrations as chapter headers that align with the epigraphs at the start of each chapter. How did these illustrations influence your experience of the story?

The cover of *The Wolf of Cape Fen* includes several elements from the story, including characters, settings, hints of magic, and tone. **Analyze why the illustrator might have chosen these images and how they contribute to the overall text.** *Extension: if you could have chosen another image from the story to include in the cover, what would it have been and why?*



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Journaling Prompts

Part 1:

- In the first chapter of *The Wolf of Cape Fen*, Eliza steps into the Wolf's path and saves her little sister. **Think of a time when your sibling or a friend was in trouble and how you were able to help them.** What happened? Why was it important to help them?
- In chapter 2, Miss Alayna dismisses Eliza and Winnie's story of the Wolf, and then in chapter 3, Sheriff Olavi also dismisses Eliza's worries. **When have you been ignored by adults?** How did that feel? What did you do?
- In chapter 7, Eliza runs after the Wolf, even though she is scared. **Think of an example from your life when you did something even though you were scared.** How was it or wasn't it worth it?
- Is there anyone in your own life you feel the same way about that Eliza feels for Winnie? What is that experience like?

Part 2:

- In chapter 14, Eliza tells Zilpha, "I never dream". Because of her anxieties of her past and for her future, she is too scared to admit to her dreams. **What dreams do you have for yourself and your future?**
- In chapter 11, Eliza is rude to Mrs. Chess. Because of this, Mrs. Chess doesn't clearly answer Eliza's questions. **What do you believe is the importance of good manners and politeness?** Are they always important or are there times when it's important not to have good manners?
- In chapter 12, Eliza reflects on her friendship with Filemon, "...liking how this sort of friendship felt inside her. The trust shape of it didn't take up space, but rather gave her space. Gave her the space to breathe." **What are the most important friendships in your life?** How do they help you? Like Eliza, in what ways do they give you the space and trust to be yourself?
- In chapter 13, Eliza makes the choice to lie to her pa and her sister about what happened when she fell into the water. **When has a lie felt necessary to you?** Why was it important to tell?



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Part 3:

- In chapter 16, Eliza attends Kendare's funeral. "Eliza had been to funerals before and had seen how anger could make a home at burial sites just as easily as sorrow." **Have you ever attended a funeral or known someone who recently had a loved one pass away?** What was the experience like? What sorts of emotions did you witness or feel?
- Eliza often struggles to ask people for help, but by the end of the story, many people play a part in helping her and thus saving the day. **When has it been difficult for you to ask for help?** Why was it difficult to do so? What would have happened if you had not asked for help?
- In chapter 21, Eliza tells Baron Dire, "Your best isn't good enough." **Have you ever felt like your best wasn't good enough?** What was that experience like? How did you work through it?
- In chapter 21, Eliza learns the truth to secrets about her parents and thus about herself. **Have you ever learned a truth (big or small, positive or negative) about the important adults around you?** Describe this truth and how it impacted you.
- Throughout the story, Eliza experiences anxiety and often holds her breath as a way to calm herself. **When have you felt anxiety, and how have you coped with it?** How did your coping mechanisms help or not help?

This guide aligns with the following
Common Core Standards:

*CSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL. 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4,
3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.9, 3.10 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1,
5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4,
6.5, 6.6, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6*
*CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W. 3.1, 3.2,
3.3, 3.4, 3.10, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.8, 4.9,
4.10, 5.1, 5.3, 5.4, 5.8,
5.9, 5.10, 6.3, 6.4, 6.9,
6.10, 7.3, 7.4, 7.9, 7.10*



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