

Once upon a time, fairy tales were awesome!

Hansel and Gretel walk out of their own story and into eight classic Grimm-inspired tales. But reader beware: the (occasionally) gruesome journey is not for the faint of heart.

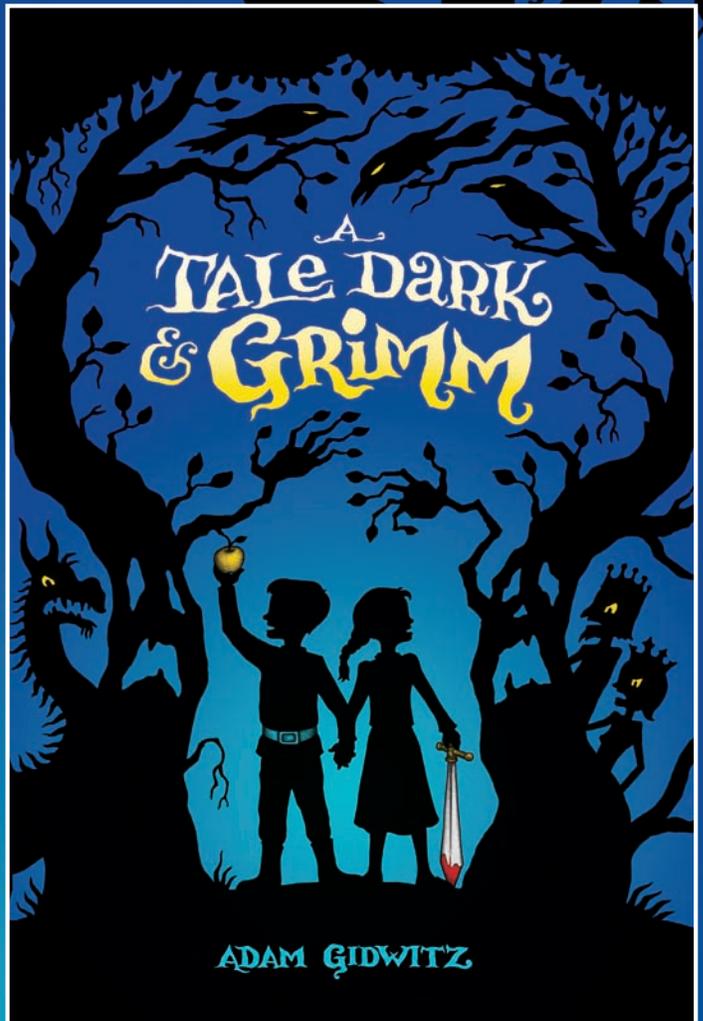
- An ALA Notable book
- A *School Library Journal* Best Book

★ “An audacious debut that’s wicked smart and wicked funny.”

—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

★ “A novel that’s almost addictively compelling.”

—*School Library Journal*, starred review



A Tale Dark & Grimm
HC: 978-0-525-42334-8 • \$16.99
Ages 10 up • Grades 5 up



About the Author

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Discussion Questions:

1. What do you think of the narrator of *A Tale Dark & Grimm*? Why? Would the story be the same without him? Why or why not? Would you ever write a story with a similar narrator? Why or why not?
2. How do the illustrations enhance *A Tale Dark & Grimm*? As you grow older, do you think you'll stop wanting to read illustrated stories? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think the author chose to put "The End" throughout the stories? How do these "ends" influence how you read the stories? How would the stories be different without them?
4. List similar aspects of the shorter stories forming *A Tale Dark & Grimm* that are also common to many fairy tales. For example, the number three appears in a number of the stories and is frequently found in fairy tales. How do these similarities affect character or story development?
5. On page 8, Faithful Johannes defines "under-stand." Explain his definition. Who in your life is someone you under-stand and who under-stands you? As part of under-standing, what do you do for each other and why?
6. In "Brother and Sister" Hansel continues to hunt animals even though he knows doing so is wrong. Why does he continue? In the past, what have you or your friends done that you knew was wrong when you were doing it? Why did you continue? What was the result and how do you feel about it?
7. On page 110, Gretel tells a true story as a dream, and people believe her for: "Once upon a time, you see, dreams were thought to possess hidden truth." Do you believe dreams possess hidden truths? Why or why not? What are the most important dreams you've had, and why are they important to you?
8. Faithful Johannes comes to believe that: "Nothing is as precious as children. Nothing" (page 153). What does he mean by this? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
9. What might the ravens represent? Using examples from the story, explain why you think so. What do you like about the ravens' role in the story and why?
10. How would you characterize the parents in this book? Explain your answer. How are they similar to parents in other fairy tales you've read and how are they different? Why do you think so many fairy tales have parents like the ones in *A Tale Dark & Grimm*?
11. Who is the dragon? What does he symbolize and why? What do dragons symbolize in other stories you've read? What do dragons most commonly symbolize? Why do you think this is so?
12. Identify a theme common to many of the book's tales. Why is it important to *A Tale Dark & Grimm*? How is this theme important to your life?
13. What in *A Tale Dark & Grimm* made you laugh? Do you usually enjoy humorous stories? Why or why not?
14. The worlds in fairy tales are very different from those most people live in today. So, why do people still enjoy reading them? Why might fairy tales still be important to people's lives?

Activities:

1. **Unique Retelling:** Choose one of the stories Adam Gidwitz retells in *A Tale Dark & Grimm*. (The table of contents provides a list.) Read the Grimm version. Decide which parts of the story are so important that they make it distinctive. Using these, write your own Unique Retelling.
2. **Who Were Those Brothers Grimm?** Learn more about the Brothers Grimm. When and where were they born? Who were their parents? Why did they retell fairy tales? When and how did they publish their retellings? How did their retellings affect literature and culture? Once you have answers to these questions, design a Who Were Those Brothers Grimm? multimedia presentation to share with others.
3. **Violence and Children:** Some argue that violent stories affect children badly. Others defend violence in fairy tales and other literature for children. Research this issue and collect evidence on both sides of the argument. After you've read all the evidence, decide what you think about the issue. Write a persuasive Violence and Children essay in which you articulate your opinion and the research that supports it.
4. **Fantastic Fractured Fairy Tales:** Research the term "fractured fairy tales." What does this term mean? How are "fractured" tales different from retellings? Are the stories in *A Tale Dark & Grimm* retellings, fractured tales, or, perhaps, both? Find some fractured fairy tales at your library or on the Internet and read them. Then write a series of blog posts reviewing Fantastic Fractured Fairy Tales—must-reads for everyone.
5. **Facing Your Dragon:** Think of a life event during which you had to face great adversity. This event should be one that changed you in some way: perhaps it altered key circumstances of your life or shifted a deeply held belief. Write a detailed narrative essay about this event. Include the changes that resulted from it: the ways in which Facing Your Dragon transformed you.

