

## THE GRAVEYARD BOOK QUESTIONS

1. *'There was a hand in the darkness, and it held a knife [...] The knife had done almost everything it was brought to that house to do, and both the blade and the handle were wet.'*

**(a) How do the first few paragraphs set the tone for the rest of the novel? (b) What kind of atmosphere do they create (think about how they make you feel)? How has the author created this atmosphere (think about the structure of the opening sentences, and choice of words)?**

2. *'Well, you can't stay here all your life, can you? One day you'll grow up and then you will have to go and live in the world outside.'* (Scarlett to Bod)

**(a) Can The Graveyard Book be considered a coming-of-age story? (b) What does Bod learn about himself, human nature and the world during the course of the novel?**

3. **Consider the following excerpts:**

*'[...] death is the great democracy'*

*'You're alive, Bod. That means you have infinite potential. You can do anything, make anything, dream anything. If you change the world, the world will change. Potential. Once you're dead, it's gone. Over. You've made what you've made, dreamed your dream, written your name [...] that potential is finished.'*

*'Face your life/ Its pain, its pleasure, / Leave no path untaken'*

*'I want to see life. I want to hold it in my hands.'*

*'[...] there was Life; and Bod walked into it with his eyes and his heart wide open.'*

**What does The Graveyard Book say about life and human experience?**

4. Bod's friendship with Scarlett is one of his few points of contact with the world of the living. **Why do you think the author created Scarlett's character?** ( Think about : What does she add to the story? What role does she play in Bod's assimilation into life in the graveyard? And what role does she play in Bod's ultimate battle?)

5. *'It is going to take more than just a couple of good-hearted souls to raise this child. It will'*, said Silas, *'take a graveyard.'*

**Consider the characters of Silas, Miss Lupescu and Liza Hempstock. (a)What does Bod learn from his relationship with each? (b)Do they learn anything from him? (c)Which relationship has most impact on Bod?**

6. **The graveyard is populated by supernatural beings, but how typically are they represented? (a) How do they compare with representations of ghouls, werewolves and vampires in other books you've read, or films you've watched? (b)Did the author's representation of any of these beings surprise you? (c)Why do you think he chose to represent them as he did?**

7. **The novel blends a sense of timelessness with references that set it in the modern world. How aware of time and place were you while reading the novel?**

8. **(a)Do you think Bod is motivated by revenge, anger or self-preservation? (b)How did you feel when Scarlett tells Bod *'You aren't a person. People don't behave like you. You're as bad as he was. You're a monster.'* (Did you agree? Did you question Bod's motives or actions?)**

9. **(a)What role does the Sleer play? (b)Does your opinion of the Sleer change through the course of the novel? (c)What is the significance of the Sleer instructing Bod to *'Find your name'*? (d)And when do you think Bod realizes it was seeking a *'master to protect'*?**

10. **(a)What is the significance of the Lady on the Grey? (b)What might she symbolise?(c) What do you think she means when she says everybody rides her horse one day?**

11. **(a)What does Bod's time at school in the world of the living reveal about his character? (b)What does this chapter show about the relationship between Silas and Bod?**

12. **(a)At what point did you realize who Mr Frost was? (b)How did that realization affect your reading of the remainder of the novel?**

**13. Draw a map of the graveyard using the book as a guide. Populate your graveyard with drawings of at least four of the characters from the novel and**

**label them.**