



The Graveyard Book Discussion Questions

1. Like much of Gaiman's work, *The Graveyard Book* manages to fuse elements of humor, horror, fantasy, and mystery into a single story. Identify examples of these elements and discuss how they work together. How might the story read differently if one or more of these elements were removed?
2. It is often said that it takes a village to raise a child. How does the graveyard come together to raise this particular child? Describe the special mentoring relationships that Bod has with Silas and Miss Lupescu.
3. Boundaries—between the living and the dead, the graveyard and the world—are an important part of the novel. How does Bod test these boundaries? How do we test boundaries in our lives?
4. Bod's human interactions are limited to a short-lived friendship with Scarlett and a brief stint at school. Discuss how these experiences change Bod. How do our friendships and associations with others affect us?
5. The graveyard is populated with characters we typically think of as evil. How does Gaiman play with this idea, particularly in the characters of Silas, Miss Lupescu, and Eliza Hempstock? What do these characterizations suggest about human nature?
6. “A graveyard is not normally a democracy, and yet death is the great democracy” (p. 29). How is death the great democracy? How does Gaiman explore the relationship between the dead and the living?
7. Why is the Danse Macabre such a special night for dead? Why don't they talk about it afterwards? Do the living participants understand what's going on? Who is the lady on the grey?
8. Neil Gaiman writes for a variety of media, including graphic novels, television and anime. Did his experience writing typically visual works affect the way he told the story in *The Graveyard Book*?
9. Do you think Bod will be OK in the world of the living? What's going to be the most difficult part of his transition? How will his unique upbringing help him? Will it hold him back in any way?
10. Did you like this book? Why or why not?

About The Author

Neil Richard Gaiman was born on November 10, 1960 in Portchester, England. He now lives near Minneapolis, Minnesota.

After being rejected many times by publishers, Gaiman pursued journalism as a means to learn about the world and make connections that he hoped would later assist him in getting published. During this time he wrote his first book, a now sought-after throwaway biography of the band

Duran Duran, and a large number of articles for *Knave* magazine. In the late 1980s he wrote *Don't Panic: The Official Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy Companion* in what he calls a "classic English humorist" style; in his opinion the book is what led to his collaboration with Terry Pratchett on the comic novel *Good Omens*, about an impending apocalypse.



Gaiman also writes songs, poems and novels, and wrote the BBC dark fantasy television series *Neverwhere*, which he later adapted into a book. In addition, he wrote the English language script to the anime movie *Princess Mononoke*.

Gaiman is a Board Member as well as an active supporter of the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, and he regularly participates in fundraisers for the group, including creating materials such as the original *Snow, Glass, Apples*. In August 1997 the CBLDF awarded Gaiman their Defender of Liberty Award.

Shortly before the publication of *American Gods*, Gaiman began to write a weblog, which now resides on his official site and is one of the most-read weblogs on the Internet. Parts of it were extracted for publication in the NESFA Press collection of Gaiman miscellany, *Adventures in the Dream Trade*.

Gaiman received a World Fantasy Award for short fiction in 1991 for the *Sandman* issue, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He received the 2002 Hugo Award for outstanding novel for *American Gods*, which also won the 2002 Nebula Award. In 2003 *Coraline* won the best novella award.

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