



**WHITE CROW**  
by Marcus Sedgwick

1

In the beginning of the book, Ferelith describes Winterfold as a town eaten by the sea. Why is this description so apt?

In what way does the book's setting determine the action? Would the narrative have worked as well in a different environment?

Were you surprised to read the author's notes at the end and discover there was a real-life setting – Dunwich – that inspired Marcus Sedgwick's story? Did you imagine that a place like Winterfold could really exist?

2

There's a complex narrative technique used in the book. How many different strands does the author employ to unravel the tale? In what way do these different voices complement each other? In what way do they create tension and drama?

As a reader, how do you respond to these different parts of the story? Was there one narrative you preferred to another? If so, why?

The main protagonist in the story – Rebecca – doesn't have a narrative voice. Why not? In what way would the novel have changed if Rebecca had been one of the narrators?

3

What kind of a character is Ferelith? Why does the author give her such an unusual name? Why do you think she behaves in the way she does?

From her first narrative, what do you make of her relationship with Rebecca?

Is it important that we hear her voice and her thoughts in this narrative before we even know what she's called? Why does that matter so much to us?

4

What is happening in Rebecca's life when she first comes to Winterfold? Why is she there? Does she want to be there?

What kind of relationship does she have with her father? Are they close? Do they get on well?

What is missing from Rebecca's life? Does Ferelith make Rebecca feel happier and more settled? How does she do this?



5

When Rebecca and Ferelith first meet, it's by the cliff edge. What happens next? Why is this first meeting a key moment in the story?

When Rebecca ask Ferelith why she's standing so near the edge of the cliff she replies, 'same reason as you... it's irresistible, isn't it? To stand on the edge.'

What does she mean? Do you understand what Ferelith is talking about? Does Rebecca? What do the two girls share in common, and what sets them apart from each other?

6

Throughout the book, there are two stories being told concurrently. What links the two?

How does the story set in 1798 affect the story being told in modern times? How are the various parts of the story represented differently on the page to the reader?

Why is the story told in this way? What is the effect?

7

What is the significance of the book's title?

One of the themes of the book is the attraction of opposites – conflicting views and people. How does the author communicate these ideas?

What does Ferelith claim in her theory about proving life after death? How does this relate to the notion of a single white crow? Do you believe her?

8

*'It's quite a horrible story. I love it.'*

Why does Ferelith enjoy telling Rebecca the legend of Winterfold Hall? What effect did the story have on you?

Does she tell the story well? Does she do it justice? Does it change the way Rebecca feels about Ferelith?

9

After Rebecca has heard the legend of Winterfold Hall, she asks Ferelith if she believes in God. Why would she ask this question now? How does the question relate to the legend of Winterfold Hall?

What is Ferelith's response to the question? Is this the sort of answer you would expect from Ferelith?

10

The book begins with a chapter called Resurrection and the second last chapter is also called Resurrection. In what subtle way do these two chapters differ? Why does the author introduce this tiny change?

How do you react to the end of the story? Were you surprised to find out who had died, and who had survived?

