

**CHELSEA  
DICKSON:**

Well, the original fairy tale itself is very dark. . But this almost makes it darker from Gretel's point of view, just because there's so much post fairy tale. She's having a rough time coping after killing the witch and her step-mother's death. In line 7 through 8, she says, "now far from women's arms and memory of women", which the women she could be referencing could be the witch and could be her step-mom from the fairy tale who also dies at the end of the story.

It's interesting that along with some memory of women that seems to be far away now there's also this memory of war. So it's almost like a negative connotation about these women. And it almost in the last stanza, she's implying that she's being watched too. She says, "Am I alone? Spies hiss the stillness, Hansel. We are there still and it is real real." The spies could be real spies she thinks are following her or memories that are hissing in the stillness.

So yeah. And then she's being sort of forced by her dad to forget the battle that she fought. Because her father bars the door, bars harm from this house, and it is years no one remembers. But she remembers. And I think her brother remembers. Or no, her brother doesn't want to remember. So Gretel is alone in this memory. Yeah, I'm going back to the line 3 through 5 about the witch. "I hear the witch's cry break in the moonlight through a sheet of sugar. God rewards."

So I'm guessing the witch is dying here, and because they have had faith, they're still alive. I guess you talk with your mouth, with your tongue, so it's especially important that the witch can no longer speak. I'm guessing whatever the metaphorical witch the author is referring to is saying that the witch had a lot of like verbal power or that words had a lot of power. So now that their words are gone, like a reward from god.

Maybe for this one, I would choose a theme and sort of set up the paper that way, and then sort of find lines in the poem that are referencing the theme, like the theme about women-- specifically the lack of the role of women in the poem, how the witch dies. All the other women are far away and only have Gretel as the female voice in this poem. So it's setting her up as being a very singular female voice. And then also what that means in terms of I guess the power it gives her. Why was she the only woman who survived this conflict here all the women were evil basically except for Gretel.

And this is sort of reclaiming that and putting it through her, giving her take on the story. I

guess they're all murderers, but she's the only one who is given a platform, I guess. Her killing seems justified because she's talking about why she killed. Yeah, I take lots of notes. I definitely try to talk to other people about it and just sort of, especially with poetry, sort of walk through it with other people.

Because usually there are numerous ways to interpret something. And then I guess first setting for writing a paper about a poem like this, I pick up on themes throughout the poem and then just pull from places in the poem where I think that theme is being referenced. Maybe for this one I would choose a theme and then sort of find lines in the poem that are referencing that theme, like the theme about women. I would go to lines 7 and 8-- "far from women's arms and memory of women" and then also where it's talking about the witch and sort of set up the paper that way.