



The Rocking-Horse Winner

First Time Reading

1. Give a summary of the extract in 50 words or fewer.

2. What impressions do we get of the boy Paul and his mother from the extract?

3. Would you describe the ending of the story as tragic? Why or why not?

Closer Reading

4. How do we know the boy is unwell from the opening paragraph?

5. The nursery nurse describes the boy as going 'to bed as right as a trivet'. What is a 'trivet'? Is this an appropriate simile? Why or why not?

6. The story has a third person narration but when the mother returns home to her son the description is from her perspective. Why is it important that we know the inner thoughts of the mother throughout this section?

7. Why do you think the author had the room in darkness as the mother enters? Look closely at the paragraph... 'The room was dark. Yet in the space near the window, she heard and saw something plunging to and fro. She gazed in fear and amazement.'

8. Paul is described as having eyes 'like blue stones' during his illness. What language technique is this an example of? What is the effect of it?



9. What do you think the title refers to? Is the title ironic?

10. At the end of the story the boy describes himself as 'lucky'. What do you think of this description? Would you agree? Why or why not?

11. What is the effect of the short line 'But the boy died in the night'?
