

Background Information

Sample Analysis of *Hansel and Gretel*

Element of worldview	Conclusions about worldview	Evidence to support conclusions
View of human nature	Some people are good hearted, while others are very nasty.	The children's stepmother and the witch appear to be evil, whereas their father seems compassionate.
View of the good life	There is an emphasis on family, genuine affection, not materialism.	At the end of the tale, Hansel and Gretel are happy simply by being reunited with their father. The gingerbread house appears inviting but actually houses evil.
Equality of people	Not clearly articulated.	No specific evidence.
Responsibility to others	One must be responsible for others even if it seems impossible to be of help.	Hansel consoles Gretel when they are lost and tries to help, but Gretel, even though younger, ends up helping her brother.
Relationship between individuals and the state	Individuals appear to be dependent upon their own resources—no authority figures provide any help.	The father doesn't defend the children against the stepmother, and the children are saved from the witch by their own devices (pushed her into the oven).
Relationship of human beings with nature	Nature is both good and bad or neutral.	The children become lost because the birds eat the breadcrumbs, but a bird also helps the children find their way home.
Source of ethical wisdom	No clear external source of moral authority beyond individual conscience.	The children help each other, but no one else acts ethically. The father is weak; the stepmother is evil.