

Wolf

Winter

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A Reading Group Guide

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- To what extent does landscape affect the behavior of the characters in *Wolf Winter*?
- There are three narrators in this story: Maija, Frederika, and the priest. How do their narrative styles differ?
- Women are at the center of this story. Given the period in which the book is set, their agency is limited. How easy is it for a modern reader to accept this?
- How would you characterize the relationship between Maija and Frederika?
- Jutta, Maia's grandmother, appears to her. What role does she play?
- Why is Maija so hostile to Frederika's gifts?
- What role do animals – real and imagined – play in this story?
- Other, older, belief systems lie very close to the surface of people's lives on Blackåsen Mountain. How does the Church attempt to control and manipulate them for its own end?
- Cecilia Ekbäck has described a 'Wolf Winter' as a moment in our lives when we confront our very darkest thoughts. How do the three main characters emerge from their Wolf Winters?
- What do you imagine lies in store for the priest?
- When Maija's husband returns (we may assume he does), how might their relationship have changed?
- Each of the settlers has brought with them to their new homes on Blackåsen Mountain the burdens of their pasts. How do the events in the book impact on them?
- What lies behind Elin Eriksson's actions?
- The Lapps lead their lives largely in parallel to the settlers. What happens when the two communities come together?
- Why does Maija persist in her inquiries?
- Do you think the priest is a moral, immoral, or amoral agent in the story?
- Why do you think the other settlers regard Maija as a threat?