

NAME:

Questions for "To Build a Fire"

1. Why do you think the protagonist is referred to as "the man" as opposed to being given a name?
2. What is the weather like at day break when the story begins? What do you think this foreshadows for the rest of the story?
3. How are the man and the dog similar? How are they different? Why does London emphasize that the dog acts from instinct?
4. When he falls in the river, the man curses his bad luck. Do you agree with where he places his blame? Why or why not?

5. In the paragraph where the man reflects on “old-timers” and “men who are men” what do you think of his mentality and beliefs?
6. Why does the man start to berate the dog?
7. How does the dog know to leave and head to the camp?
8. This story takes place around the year 1900. How might the story be different if it took place today?

9. How can we read "To Build a Fire" as a cautionary tale? What lesson can we take away from it that's relevant beyond the story's Yukon setting?

10. Even today, stories of wilderness survival are extremely popular. Why do you think this is? What do today's stories about perseverance and survival (i.e. The Hunger Games, The Walking Dead) have in common with London's story? How are they different?