

To Build A Fire

Read Jack London's short story To Build A Fire and answer the following questions. Think about each question carefully and answer thoroughly to get full credit. Remember to use complete sentences.

Text: <http://americanliterature.com/author/jack-london/short-story/to-build-a-fire>

1. Even today, stories of wilderness survival are extremely popular. Why do you think this is? What is it about wilderness survival that keeps audiences coming back for more?
2. This story takes place around the year 1900. How might the story be different if it took place today? (Would the man just text his buddies at the camp to say, "I'm gonna B a little L8"?)
3. The main character in this story seems to take a pretty easygoing attitude toward his dangerous situation. It's not until things are really, really bad that he starts to panic. Would he have been better off if he'd panicked earlier, or was he right to remain calm for so long? Why?
4. From what we can tell, the man in this story begins his journey knowing that he has more than nine hours of walking ahead of him. Why wouldn't he just poke his head out the door and decide the day was too cold for traveling? Is it believable that he didn't really notice how cold it was until he'd gone too far to turn back?
5. 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?