

A STUDY GUIDE TO SHERLOCK HOLMES

By William S. Dorn



**The Return of Sherlock Holmes
Adventure XXXVII -- The
Adventure of the Golden
Pince-Nez**

**THE GOLDEN PINCE-NEZ
DATE OF THE ADVENTURE***
(Date when Anna committed suicide)

CLUES:

1. Watson says, as the story opened it was “ ... the year 1894, ...” (607)
2. Watson also says, it was “ ... towards the close of November.” (607)
3. Finally Watson says, “It was a wild, tempestuous night ... “ (607)
4. Holmes says to Hopkins, “It must be something important which has brought you out in such a gale.” (608)
5. In November 1894, the latest date on which there was strong wind and rain was Wednesday the 14th.
6. The case was solved the day after it opened.

CONCLUSIONS:

- A. 1 and 2 imply it was towards the end of November, 1894.
- B. 3 and 4 imply there were strong winds (gale force) and rain
- C. A, B, and 5 imply the case opened on Wednesday, November 14, 1894
- D. C and 6 imply the case ended on Thursday, November 15, 1894

Anna committed suicide on Thursday, November 15, 1894

*The story may contain other clues to the date of the adventure. However, use only the clues shown here. Your only goal should be to use logical reasoning to find a date based on the clues shown here.

THE GOLDEN PINCE-NEZ VOCABULARY WORDS

barrow (607) – **large mound of earth or stones placed over a burial site**

palimpsest (607, 608, 611) – **manuscript, typically papyrus or parchment, that has been written on more than once, with the earlier writing incompletely erased and often legible**

pavement (608) – **sidewalk**

cravat (608) – **scarf**

goloshes (608) – **waterproof boots**

Bath chair (609) – **three-wheeled invalid's chair either pushed by an attendant or pulled by a pony; named for the resort town where it originated**

carotid artery (610) – **one of the two large arteries which carry blood from the aorta to the head and brain**

sealing-wax knife (610) – **letter opener used when a letter is sealed with a resinous preparation of shellac and turpentine that is soft and fluid when heated but solidifies upon cooling**

pince-nez (612) – **eyeglasses clipped to the bridge of the nose**

slatternly (612) – **slovenly; untidy**

dogmatic (612) – **authoritative, arrogant assertion of unproved or unprovable principles**

spirit lamp (613) – **Bunsen burner; a vertical metal tube connected to a gas source and producing a hot flame**

Chubb's key (614) – **key for a type of lock invented by Charles Chubb**

aquiline (615) – **eagle-like**

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fetid (615) – **having an offensive odor**

magnum opus (615) – **Latin got ‘great work’; greatest single work of a writer**

Coptic (615) – **relating to Egyptians belonging to or descended from the people of ancient or pre-Islamic Egypt**

distract (616) – **inattentive or preoccupied, especially because of anxiety**

Nihilists (619) – **members of a revolutionary movement of mid 19th-century Russia that advocated scorn for authority and tradition and believed in reason, materialism, and radical change in society and government through terrorism and assassination**

phial (621) – **vial**

dun colour (621) – **brownish gray to dull grayish brown**

THE GOLDEN PINCE-NEZ OPEN QUESTIONS

1. The floor plan for the Yoxley Old Place (610) is rather unusual.
 - a. Are there no other rooms leading from the curved corridor that goes to the Professor's bedroom?

There don't appear to be any. Perhaps the Professor's bedroom was separate from the main part of the house, and this corridor was more of a covered walkway.

- b. Two corridors meet at right angles at the Professor's study. Is the door set at 45 degrees? Or are there two doors to the study from those corridors?

It is very unlikely that there would be two doors abutting each other; it is more likely that there was a single door set at 45 degrees, although that also seems strange.

2. Which corridor did the maid, Susan, run down to the study? And from which direction did she run?

It must have been the corridor on the other side of the study from the double corridors, and presumably Susan came from the left. However, that corridor is rather unusual too. What, if anything, is on the lower side of the corridor (the side towards the study)? There is a window from the study facing whatever is there. Does the corridor run along side the outdoors?

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3. There certainly was gas for lighting at 221 Baker Street. Why then did Holmes say (613), “I’ll light my spirit lamp, and give you a cup of coffee before we start”?

Probably because he (Holmes) did not want to invade Mrs. Hudson’s kitchen to make a cup of coffee.

THE GOLDEN PINCE-NEZ SIMPLE QUIZ*

1. Who discovered Willoughby Smith after he had been fatally stabbed?
 - a. Susan Tarlton, the maid
 - b. Willoughby Smith's mother
 - c. Mrs. King, the cook
 - d. none of the above

2. Where was Anna hiding?
 - a. in the cellar
 - b. behind the bookcase
 - c. in the attic
 - d. none of the above

3. How did Anna die?
 - a. she took poison
 - b. she was stabbed
 - c. she had a heart attack
 - d. none of the above

* The Simple Quiz is designed to determine if the student has read the story. Anyone who has read the story through should have no trouble in completing this quiz. The Intermediate and Advanced Quizzes are more challenging.

THE GOLDEN PINCE-NEZ INTERMEDIATE QUIZ[#]

1. What was the name of the Scotland Yard detective in this case?
 - a. Inspector Lestrade
 - b. Altheney Jones
 - c. Stanley Hopkins
 - d. none of the above

2. What was the name of Professor Coram's home?
 - a. Stoke Moran
 - b. Riding Thorp Manor
 - c. Yoxley Old Place
 - d. none of the above

3. What covered the floor on both corridors leading from the Professor's study?
 - a. well worn carpet
 - b. tile
 - c. coconut matting
 - d. none of the above

4. What did Holmes leave in front of the bookcase to verify that Anna was hiding there?
 - a. cigarette ashes
 - b. flower petals
 - c. bits of paper
 - d. none of the above

[#] The Intermediate Quiz is designed to test whether the student has read the story with reasonable attention to detail. The Simple Quiz is an easier test while the Advanced Quiz is much more challenging.

THE GOLDEN PINCE-NEZ ADVANCED QUIZ[&]

1. In what century was the palimpsest that Holmes was attempting to decipher written?
 - a. 12th
 - b. 15th
 - c. 16th
 - d. none of the above

2. How old was Anna when she married Professor Coram?
 - a. 17
 - b. 20
 - c. 22
 - d. none of the above

3. With what was Willoughby Smith stabbed?
 - a. a pair of sharp scissors
 - b. an ivory letter opener
 - c. a sealing wax knife
 - d. none of the above

4. What was the name of Professor Coram's gardener?
 - a. Muller
 - b. Morgan
 - c. Mortimer
 - d. none of the above

[&] The Advanced Quiz is designed for aficionados of the Canon. The questions are quite challenging. The Intermediate and Simple Quizzes are designed for the more casual reader of the stories.

ANSWERS TO QUIZZES FOR THE RETURN

QUESTION	1	2	3	4
Empty House				
Simple	c	c	c	xx
Intermediate	a	b	c	c
Advanced	c	a	a	b
Norwood Builder				
Simple	c	a	b	xx
Intermediate	a	a	b	c
Advanced	a	a	a	b
Dancing Men				
Simple	b	b	a	xx
Intermediate	b	c	a	a
Advanced	b	b	a	b
Solitary Cyclist				
Simple	a	c	c	xx
Intermediate	b	c	c	b
Advanced	b	c	a	c
Priory School				
Simple	b	a	c	xx
Intermediate	c	b	a	b
Advanced	d	a	c	b
Black Peter				
Simple	b	a	c	xx
Intermediate	b	c	b	c
Advanced	b	c	b	d
Charles Augustus Milverton				
Simple	b	a	a	xx
Intermediate	c	c	a	b
Advanced	b	c	b	a

QUESTION	1	2	3	4
Six Napoleons				
Simple	a	c	c	xx
Intermediate	b	b	c	b
Advanced	c	a	a	b
Three Students				
Simple	c	a	d	xx
Intermediate	a	b	c	b
Advanced	b	c	a	b
Golden Pince-Nez				
Simple	a	b	a	xx
Intermediate	c	c	c	a
Advanced	b	b	c	c
Missing Three-Quarter				
Simple	b	c	b	xx
Intermediate	b	a	b	c
Advanced	a	c	b	a
Abbey Grange				
Simple	a	c	c	xx
Intermediate	c	b	b	c
Advanced	b	b	a	b
Second Stain				
Simple	a	a	b	xx
Intermediate	c	a	b	c
Advanced	a	b	a	c