

The Far and the Near

Reading Questions

**Text evidence for all

1. As you read about the engineer's approaching visit to the little town, what did *you* hope he would find?
2. What has been the engineer's daily experience for the last twenty years? What does this tell you about the engineer's life?
3. How does the engineer feel about the little house and the two women? What do the house and the women *represent* to him?
5. What is the engineer's first impression of the town when he comes to visit?
6. What realization does the engineer come to at the end of the story?
7. In what ways do the engineer's observations in the final scene contrast with his expectations?
8. Considering the title of the story, what do you think Wolfe is saying about human longing?
9. The engineer is crushed when he discovers his optimism was not based on reality. Is it possible to confront reality and remain hopeful about life at the same time? Explain.