

“An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” by Ambrose Bierce

Part I

1. Identify the *point of view* in Part I.
2. What does the tone in the first two paragraphs of Part I reveal about the narrator’s perspective?
3. How does the point of view shift in Part I?
4. How does Ambrose Bierce create *suspense* in Part I?

Part II

5. What do Farquhar and his wife learn from the visitor? What do you learn about the visitor after he leaves?
6. What is the Union soldiers’ reason for hanging Farquhar? Cite evidence to support your inference.
7. What is the purpose for this *flashback*?

Part III

8. Contrast the tone and point of view in Part III with the tone and point of view in Part I. What effect does this shift in perspective have on the reader’s experience of the story?
9. How does Farquhar’s description of the forest *foreshadow* the end of the story?
10. What is the effect of the shift in point of view in the last paragraph?
11. Many readers find the story’s conclusion powerful, but others argue that the ending is nothing more than a gimmick and cheats the reader. What do you think?