

"An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" Literary Analysis

Directions: You are to compose a literary analysis **over 1½ pages in length** in MLA format on one of the following prompts.

Prompt 1: Compose a well-written essay **analyzing** how Bierce thematically conveys his view of the military and war in his short story, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge." Be sure to **determine and articulate** Bierce's view and then **analyze** how Bierce uses literary techniques (such as figurative language, plot elements, arrangement, allusion, characterization, symbolism, imagery, etc.) to develop this theme. **Support** your responses with examples from the text.

Prompt 2: Compose a well-written essay **analyzing** the literary techniques Bierce employs to create and maintain suspense in his short story, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge." You may want to consider imagery, arrangement, characterization, as well as plot elements. **Support** your responses with examples from the text.

Prompt 3: Even though upon first reading the conclusion of Bierce's story comes as a shock, after close reading, readers discover that Bierce foreshadows the ending through a variety of literary techniques including imagery, preternatural plot elements, allusion, etc. Compose a well-written essay **analyzing** the techniques Bierce implements that contribute to foreshadowing the ending. **Support** your responses with examples from the text.

Requirements and Due Dates: Your rough draft is due _____. Your final draft is due on _____.

Remember the rules of successful academic writing:

- Your response must completely address all elements of the prompt.
- You must write in formal academic voice. Do not address the reader by using second person point of view ("you") or by asking rhetorical questions. Do not use first person ("I").
- Literature is alive, so use literary present tense.
- You must have a focused thesis statement.
- Incorporate quotes into your own sentences; do not use quotes as topic sentences.
- You must have a strong opening paragraph and fully developed body paragraphs.
- Do not refer to your own paper with statements like, "This essay is going to be about..."
- Each body paragraph must relate to your thesis; you should make connections and avoid digressions. Your body paragraphs should be at least 4 sentences in length.
- Remember: follow your topic sentence with a concrete detail and two or more sentences commenting on the relevance or elaborating on the significance.
- Use effective transitions.
- Avoid over-summarizing; use plot elements primarily to support your points.
- Avoid passive ("to be") verbs. Use strong verbs.
- In your conclusion, reassert your thesis and discuss the significance of your essay.
- Use "Gunnar's Tools for Quality Written Expression."