

“An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” Jigsaw Questions

- 1. In Part 1, Bierce includes few details about the condemned man and does not reveal the reason why he is being hanged. How does this help create suspense?**
- 2. In what ways are the condemned man’s perceptions of time and motion distorted as he is waiting to be hanged? Why are his distorted perceptions important?**
- 3. What seems to be the narrator’s attitude toward Farquhar in Part II? What is the narrator’s attitude toward war?**
- 4. Considering the outcome of the story, what is ironic or surprising about Farquhar’s longing for the “larger life of a soldier?” What is ironic about the fact that Farquhar agrees with the saying that “all is fair in love and war?”**
- 5. What details in Part III suggests that Farquhar’s journey occurs in his mind? How is the journey connected with the plan of escape that occurs to him moments before he is hanged?**
- 6. Explain whether you think the portrayal of Farquhar’s final thoughts and sensations is realistic.**
- 7. Point of view refers to the vantage point from which the story is told. Why is the limited third-person point of view appropriate for this story? How might the story be different if Bierce had used an omniscient third-person narrator?**
- 8. How does Bierce’s use of flashback contribute to the effectiveness of the story?**