

“An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge”  
Ambrose Bierce

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. Briefly respond to the video – include whether, or not, you were surprised by the ending.
2. What is Bierce’s attitude toward war? How do you know this (Bierce’s attitude) from the video? No... not “war is hell” – that’s always his attitude. Specifically, in this story, what is his message about war?
3. Given the bulk of this story, the “realist” tag seems misplaced. However, Bierce *is* a “realist”. In what ways does this story fit the definition for the literary time period of Realism?
4. Analyze the title. What does it mean? How does it contribute to Bierce’s theme?
5. Oh, yeah! What is the theme of this story? Be sure to write it as a theme statement.
6. Is it a “cheap” ending, or is an appropriate ending given Bierce’s message about war?
7. Define “determinism”?
8. Define “free will”?
9. Which does Bierce seem to believe?
10. Explain how this story shows Bierce’s philosophical attitude, (of either “free will” or “determinism”).