

**WORKSHEET**

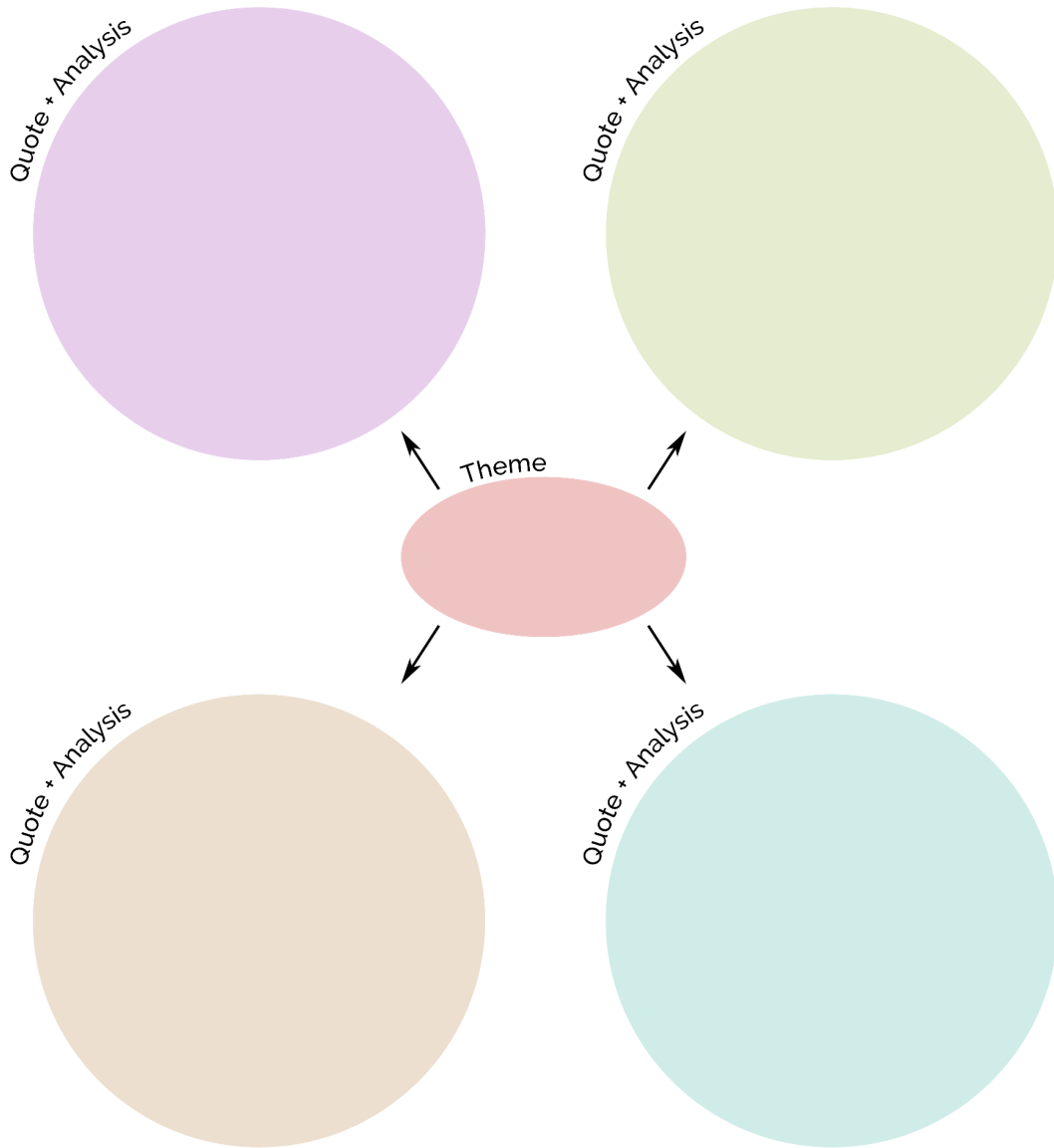
# An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge

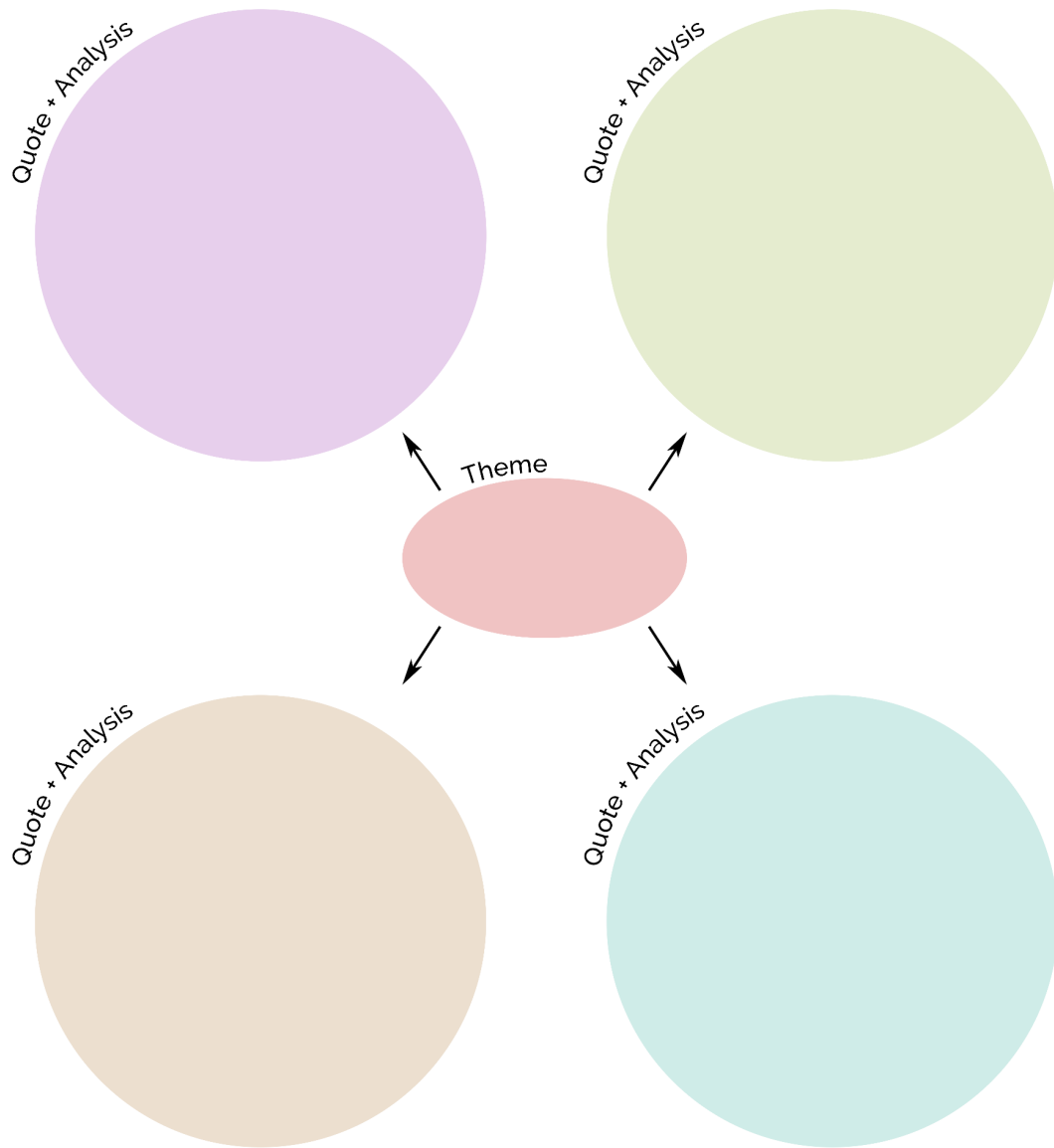
Ambrose Bierce

**TASKS**

**1a.** Pick two of these themes, then make a mind map for each by adding four separate quotations from the story that relate to them. Make short notes of analysis, explaining how and why each one relates to your theme.

- The Power of Perception
- The Cruelty of War
- The Illusion of Freedom
- The Inevitability of Death
- The Thin Line Between Reality and Illusion
- The Desire for Glory and Recognition
- Psychology and Trauma





**1b.** What, in your opinion, is the author’s final message or statement about each theme that you chose?

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2. Before studying further, read extensively about the American Civil War. Then, answer the questions below:

- **What was it?**
- **Why did it start?**
- **How did it end?**
- **What was its lasting impact on America?**
- **Find definitions for the key terms below:**
  - Union
  - Confederacy
  - Secession
  - Emancipation Proclamation
  - Agitator
  - Plantation
  - Civilian





**EXERCISES**

1. Identify the characteristics of Peyton Farquhar, the protagonist of the story. Describe him in your own words. What does his experience tell you about the human condition?

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2. Identify instances where the line between illusion and reality blurs in the story, using quotations as references. Discuss how these instances impact your understanding of the narrative and its themes.

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3. Imagine you are a character in the story observing Farquhar's execution. Write a diary entry describing the events and your thoughts on them.

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4. Find three examples of powerful imagery in the story, explaining briefly for each one how / why it is effective.

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## PRACTICE ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. "War is depicted as a ruthless and dehumanising force in the story." How far do you agree with this statement? Provide evidence from the text to substantiate your viewpoint.
2. "Peyton Farquhar's imagined escape is a profound exploration of the human longing for freedom." To what extent do you agree with the statement?
3. Examine the role of the setting of the American Civil War in shaping the events and themes in 'An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge'.
4. "The story challenges the romanticised notion of war and glory." In light of this statement, discuss how Farquhar's motivations and eventual end serve as a critique of the glorification of war.