

English 11 Interim Assessment 2

Reading Comprehension and Argument Essay

Directions: Closely read each of the four texts provided and answer the multiple choice questions that follow each text. Then, write a source-based argument on the topic below. You may use the margins to take notes as you read and scrap paper to plan your response.

Topic: Should pets be allowed in the workplace?

Your Task: Carefully read each of the four texts provided and answer the multiple choice questions that follow each text. Then, using evidence from at least three of the texts, write a well-developed argument regarding whether or not pets should be allowed in the workplace. Clearly establish your claim, distinguish your claim from alternate or opposing claims, and use specific, relevant, and sufficient evidence from at least three of the texts to develop your argument. Do not simply summarize each text.

Guidelines:

Be sure to:

- Establish your claim regarding whether or not pets should be allowed in the workplace
- Distinguish your claim from alternate or opposing claims
- Use specific, relevant, and sufficient evidence from at least three of the texts to develop your argument
- Identify each source that you reference by text number and line number(s) or graphic (for example: Text 1, line 4 or Text 2, graphic)
- Organize your ideas in a cohesive and coherent manner
- Maintain a formal style of writing
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

Texts:

Text 1 – Do Pets in the Workplace Improve Morale?

Text 2 – Why Pets in the Workplace May Not Be As Great As You Thought

Text 3 – Why a Pet-Friendly Office May Be the Key to Employee Satisfaction

Text 4 – Don't Bring Your Dog to Work

Text 1

Do Pets in the Workplace Improve Morale?

Human resource managers are always looking for ways to improve morale and create a more appealing workplace culture. The popularity of the recent film release “The Secret Life of Pets” [2016] underscores the love we Americans have for our pets. In fact, around 65 percent of U.S. households are home to at least one pet. The majority of these are dogs and cats. ...

5 The benefits of being around animals have inspired human resource personnel and other business decision makers to allow pets in the workplace. The top motive for making this allowance is the stress-reducing effect that animals bring. Employees who are less stressed at work are more productive and miss fewer days due to being sick.

10 Pet-friendly businesses usually focus mainly on allowing dogs in the workplace. However, some allow cats, birds and reptiles. A retail business might have “shop cats” that live on the premises, or smaller animals kept in cages that can become company mascots and offer a source of stress relief for workers.

An Internet giant paves the way with pets in the workplace.

... These days, about 2,000 dogs accompany their owners to Amazon each day. Workers and management have embraced the culture, and the pet-friendly policy benefits both
15 owners and those who don’t own pets. No matter what the workday brings, Amazon staff members are never far away from a coworker’s terrier or spaniel poking its head around a corner. Any stress they were feeling melts away. ...

Pet-friendly workplaces rate higher.

Banfield Pet Hospital recently surveyed over 1,000 employees and 200 human resource decision makers for its Pets At Work barometer called “Pet-Friendly Workplace
20 PAWrometer.” The goal was to measure worker opinions about pets in the workplace. Those who worked in pet-friendly offices were found to believe it improves the atmosphere in the workplace significantly.

The majority of workers in pet-friendly workplaces consider the policy to be positive. A full 91 percent of managers and 82 percent of employees felt workers become more loyal to
25 the company with this policy. A large majority felt it made the workplace more productive, and 86 percent of workers and 92 percent of management reported decreased worker stress levels. Not only do pets in the workplace make the environment less stressful, workers are also less burdened with guilt about leaving a pet at home alone while they are at work. They are then more likely to work longer hours if required.

30 While pet-friendly businesses improve existing employees’ lives, they are also appealing to new applicants. It’s a benefit that millennials¹ find appealing and offers a way to draw in a larger talent pool.

So, how do pet-friendly workplaces stack up in terms of pros and cons? Let’s take a look:

The benefits of pets in the workplace.

- **Happier, more productive workers.** Both pet owners and non-pet owning
35 employees report lowered stress levels and a higher level of job satisfaction with pets on the premises. This naturally leads to increased productivity.

¹ millennials — the generation born in the 1980s or 1990s, especially in the U.S.

- 40
- **Healthier workers.** In addition to reduced stress levels, being around animals has documented positive effects on blood pressure, cholesterol levels and the immune system.
 - **Increased loyalty.** Over half of employees in non-pet-friendly workplaces report they'd be more likely to continue working for a company if they could bring their pet to work.

Potential problems you may encounter by allowing pets in the workplace.

- 45
- **Not everyone is an animal lover.** There are people who dislike animals for one reason or another. Allergies, phobias, or a general dislike of animals could cause pets in the workplace to encroach² upon productivity and quality of life for these individuals.
 - **Hygiene and cleanliness issues.** Even potty-trained pets can have an accident now and then. There is no guarantee this won't happen in the workplace, especially with a high volume of animals brought to work.
 - 50 • **Interofficesquabbles.** Not all animals get along, so there is the potential for fights between dogs and cats brought to work.

While worker distraction is a concern for some human resource managers considering a pet-friendly policy, the vast majority report that the benefits to morale and overall productivity far outweigh time spent "distracted" by pets in the workplace.

- 55
- Advocates of allowing pets in the workplace insist that there are ways around the "cons" or risks of pet-friendly workplaces. The key to a successful pet policy is a clear structure. ...

—excerpted and adapted from "Do Pets in the Workplace Improve Morale?"
<https://online.arbor.edu>, August 8, 2016

²encroach — intrude

1) As used in line 14, the word "embraced" most nearly means

- (1) accepted
- (2) seized
- (3) rejected
- (4) questioned

2) Which of the following is **NOT** a finding of the effects of pets in the "Pet-Friendly Workplace PAWrometer" survey described in lines 18-29?

- (1) increased worker loyalty
- (2) increased worker production
- (3) decreased worker stress
- (4) decreased worker sick days

Text 2

Why Pets in the Workplace May Not Be As Great As You Thought

...Study after study has proven how pets have a calming effect on our bodies and minds, how they help children with A.D.D. [Attention Deficit Disorder] focus better, how they reduce blood pressure and lower stress, how pets at the workplace make employees more creative, productive, and cordial to each other, and how they're such awesome additions to our lives overall.

So it would seem that if we spend the best parts of our waking hours at work, there's no better way to carry forward these wonderful benefits that pets bring into our work lives too, right? Well, unfortunately there are no simple answers here.

While there is a growing wave of companies led by the usual suspects—Google, Zynga, Ben & Jerry's, and others—that allow employees to take their pets along to the workplace, there's also a growing debate about the practicality of the whole idea. And these voices of concern are not just coming from the minority of pet-haters or pet-neutral folks around. Even pet owners have reservations about bringing their beloved pooch to the office with them on a daily basis. Here's why:

Not in the Pink of Health

...Spare a thought for the millions of your fellow Americans who suffer from pet related allergies. The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America pegs the figure of Americans with one form of pet allergy or another at 15% to 30% of the total population. Some of these allergies are so severe that they cause rashes, temporary breathlessness, panic attacks, and even severe respiratory disorders.

In addition to a physical reaction to the presence of pets around them, you could have coworkers who are genuinely scared of animals and feel stressed out around them. For such individuals a pet in their workplace is not a calming presence, but rather a constant threat to their wellbeing and safety.

Safety First

...Many industries by their very nature are not conducive¹ to having pets sauntering around. Medical facilities, pharmaceutical companies, chemical laboratories, and food businesses are all sectors where a pet can be a serious threat to the quality of the final product or service. In such environments, pets pose a genuine contamination hazard and are best kept out, no questions asked.

In some cases, it's in your pet's best interest to chill out at home and skip the trip to the workplace. Industries like construction, mining, refineries, and more can be dangerous for your pet's health and well-being. You wouldn't want to put your pet at risk just so you can be happy at work, would you? ...

Real Costs to the Company

As any pet owner will tell you, owning their bundle of joy is not cheap. From \$1570 for a large dog to \$575 for a parakeet per year, pet ownership comes at an ever-increasing price tag. When you turn your office into a pet friendly zone, you are in turn taking on some of the expenses of owning a pet upon yourself. Be prepared to stock your workplace with at least basic pet supplies like snacks, water bowls, kitty litter, and chew toys.

¹conducive — favorable

40 If you think your costs end there (or are tangible), you are mistaken. Pets at the workplace also bring with them a built-in deterrent² for employees seeking career opportunities at your organization. With the market for talented and qualified workers already so scarce, adding an extra filter to your recruitment process may not be the smartest idea from a competitive perspective. ...

45 While the benefits that pets bring with them are numerous and the pro-pet lobby gets louder with every passing day, organizations need to also give credence³ to the real issues that four-legged and feathered guests at work bring along with them. ...

²deterrent — obstacle

³credence — support

—Rohan Ayyar
excerpted and adapted from “Why Pets in the
Workplace May Not Be As Great As You Thought”
www.fastcompany.com, November 14, 2014

3) Which of the following best describes how the author begins his article (lines 1-8)?

- (1) The author asks a rhetorical question about the positive effects of pets on our lives in and out of the workplace and then answers his question
- (2) The author acknowledges an assumption many people have about the positives of pets and then questions those positives in the workplace
- (3) The author provides a personal anecdote about the positive effect pets have had on his own workplace environment
- (4) The author references the results of specific university research study that examined the negative effects of pets in the workplace

4) As used in line 21, the word “genuinely” most nearly means

- (1) surprisingly
- (2) truly
- (3) judiciously
- (4) carefully

5) Overall, Text 2 argues against pets in the work place by describing

- (1) The risk of conflicts with other animals for pets who spend time in the workplace
- (2) The legal considerations of having pets in the workplace
- (3) The negative effects of pets in the workplace on the workers and the workplace
- (4) The author’s personal experiences with his own pet at his workplace

Text 3

Why a Pet-Friendly Office May Be the Key to Employee Satisfaction

...The pet-friendly office is transforming our current idea of the typical nine-to-five workspace. Although the primary allure appears to be 24/7 cuddles with man's best friend, the actual benefits of a pet-friendly office go much deeper.

5 Some of the world's biggest companies have proudly joined the ranks of pet-friendly businesses, from Googleplex,¹ to Build-A-Bear Workshop, to hospitals in New Jersey. This shift in office culture has shown that pet-friendly offices can provide unexpected (and positive) results to all varieties of businesses. ...

Employee Satisfaction and Stress

10 Employee satisfaction is a constant concern for an engaging and exciting place. Studies have shown that unhappy workers can cause businesses to lose thousands of dollars over time due to sick leave, mediocre work, and destructive behavior. Keeping the office engaging and exciting can be a struggle, and combating organizational stress may be key to improving a company's profits. ...

15 Giving employees the option to bring their pet to work could also save them the worry associated with leaving a pet at home. Instead of scrambling through the end of the day to go home and let the dog out, they have the dog with them and can continue to work without rushing. Instead of spending money on a pet daycare on a regular basis, workers can watch their furry friend while in the office.

20 Pets are also known to be great stress-relievers in general. It's no wonder that Animal-Assisted Therapy is recognized as one of the leading treatments for post-war PTSD [Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder] and is gaining ground as a popular solution for social workers. Multiple studies have shown that simply petting cats or dogs can be extremely beneficial for our health; from lowering blood pressure to increasing bone density.

Attract Millennials

25 As a millennial, I can assure you: I would choose a pet-friendly office over the majority of other job offers out there. The benefit of bringing my pup to work is a much stronger pull than a larger paycheck or fancy corner office.

30 Millennials love their pets, and millennials love pet-friendly offices. In fact, you could even argue that millennials are the reason pet-friendly offices are taking the business world by storm. Being the largest demographic to enter the workforce, they have already brought with them a demand for a new form of workplace flexibility and a break from the traditional office culture of our predecessors. ...

Improve Communication

If you've ever walked your dog through a park or downtown area, there's a significant chance that you've received more waves, 'hellos', and acknowledgements than if you had been walking by yourself. Walking or even being near a dog is an excellent ice-breaker.

35 Shifting to a pet-friendly workspace can bring that same level of open and enthusiastic communication into the office. Water cooler conversations² will lose some of their awkward chatter, and employees will have the added encouragement of meeting new people in the

¹Googleplex — Google headquarters

²water cooler conversations — informal conversation

building through their pets. This can lead to some inspiring brainstorm conversations as well as an increase in camaraderie³ and trust among workers.

40 A 2012 study by the Virginia Commonwealth University found that employees that brought their dogs to work were not only less stressed than their pet-free predecessors, but those employees believed they were 50 percent more productive with the presence of their pets. The public relations manager of the company that participated, Lisa Conklin of Replacements Dinnerware, stated after the conclusion of the study:

45 “The study proved what we always thought: having dogs around leads to a more productive work environment, and people get to know each other through the pets. If you are in a position where something is stressful, seeing that wagging tail and puppy smile brightens the day—it can turn around the whole environment.”

Promote Employee Activity

50 On top of all these benefits, pets can also improve employee activity. Dog owners in the office will most likely have to walk their dog at least once a day, allowing them the opportunity to get away from their computer and into the open air. Workplace wellness has received considerable attention lately and more companies are making this a priority. Pet-friendly offices can inspire a smooth transition to a more ‘mobile’ office. ...

—Katie McBeth

excerpted and adapted from “Why a Pet-Friendly Office May Be the Key to Employee Satisfaction”

<https://thebossmagazine.com>, September 28, 2016

³camaraderie — fellowship

6) The details in lines 9-10 help develop the claim that pets in the workplace can be beneficial to businesses by

- (1) considering the financial cost of unhappy or stressed workers
- (2) describing the calming effect pets have on unhappy or stressed workers
- (3) analyzing the reasons for mediocre work in workplaces that don’t allow pets
- (4) questioning the practice of not allowing pets in the workplace

7) How do the details in lines 23-25 best contribute to the central claim of Text 3?

- (1) the author uses an allusion to popular culture to help readers understand the benefits of pets in the workplace
- (2) the author uses her first point of view as a millennial to advocate for the appeal of pets in the workplace
- (3) the author cites research studies that show millennials are happier in pet-friendly workplaces
- (4) the author questions the validity of studies that reject the idea of pets in the workplace

Text 4

Don't Bring Your Dog to Work

If there's a dog in the cubicle next to you, you're hardly alone: About 7 percent of employers now allow pets in the workplace, reports NPR [National Public Radio]. Five years ago, that figure stood at 5 percent. That might not seem like a big jump, but once you remove jobs that don't have offices from the equation—manufacturing and agriculture, for instance—that's about a 50 percent increase. That rise is a victory for people who tout the benefits of inviting dogs and other furry friends into the office: It lowers the stress of employees, increases morale, produces tangible health benefits, and reduces turnover, all at no cost to the company.

But how do the dogs feel about it?

"Most people do not understand dog body language," said E'Lise Christensen, a board-certified veterinary behaviorist in Colorado. One major concern she has with the rise of pet-friendly work environments is the corresponding increased risk for behavioral problems, especially dog bites. Since almost no one, not even many dog trainers, knows how to properly interpret dog body language, co-workers might interpret the panting of a dog in the office as a friendly smile, rather than a sign of nervousness. And in dogs, nervousness can lead to bites. "[People] can identify abject¹ fear, and they can identify extreme aggression, but they cannot reliably identify things in between," said Christensen. It's in that wide middle area where we may not recognize pet discomfort.

Bonnie Beaver, executive director of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists and a professor at Texas A&M University, said in an email that dog bites are not the only behavioral issues that might present problems. Generally, dogs are expected to sit still in an office setting, which can be difficult for active dogs, leading to boredom (which, in turn, leads to problem behaviors like chewing up desk legs). These policies are also particularly hard on dogs if they're taken to the office only occasionally, instead of regularly; dogs are big on routines, and uncertainty adds to their fear and stress.

Once you expand the conversation beyond our most domesticated companion, the prospects get even iffier. "Not all animals are comfortable with a very social setting," said Christensen. Each new animal, like cats or pot-bellied pigs, brings its own social complexities, not to mention the possibility of contagious disease (it's rare that employers require proof of vaccination). Rabies, ringworm, and parasitic infections like scabies are all potential health risks for humans that come into contact with pets that haven't been properly vetted.²

Of course there's obvious appeal. Many people love dogs. They write whole articles gushing about a furrier workplace. (Dog skeptics, at least vocal ones, are harder to find.) When an employer is on board, the policy is often as informal as a person in charge saying, "Yeah, sure, whatever. Bring your dogs. It'll be great." Little or no oversight is applied to a matter that needs it in order to ensure the environment is conducive³ to pets in the workplace.

Christensen said companies should ideally hire an in-house behavioral expert to oversee a pet-at-work policy, especially in the initial stages, "but unless you're Google, I don't see that happening." More realistically, she said, better awareness will go a long way. Employers should take care to craft a policy that works for dogs' well-being as well as humans'. This can

¹abject — severe

²vetted — examined

³conducive — favorable

include requiring proof of vaccinations, as well as providing training for offices on dog behavior (which can be as basic as watching videos).

“It’s critical that people with dogs get special education, in at least body language, even if they think they know normal body language,” said Christensen. Given that most people

45 can’t even tell the difference between a relaxed and anxious dog, this advice seems prudent. Before more offices throw open their doors to dogs willy-nilly⁴ and more pets start tagging along on the morning commute, we should learn how better to listen to them. They might be asking to stay at home.

—Matt Miller

excerpted and adapted from “Don’t Bring Your Dog to Work”

www.slate.com, August 15, 2016

⁴willy-nilly — in an unplanned manner

8) The details in lines 12-17 develop the text’s claim by

- (1) considering the possibility of dogs feeling nervous at the workplace
- (2) criticizing the practice of worker interaction with unfamiliar dogs
- (3) providing evidence of dog attacks that have occurred at workplaces that allow pets
- (4) highlighting the problems humans have interpreting dog behavior

9) As used in line 45, the word “prudent” most nearly means

- (1) troubling
- (2) questionable
- (3) sensible
- (4) faulty

10) Which quote from the text best sums up the central argument of Text 4 as a whole?

- (1) “If there’s a dog in the cubicle next to you, you’re hardly alone...” (line 1)
- (2) “Each new animal, like cats or pot-bellied pigs, brings its own social complexities, not to mention the possibility of contagious disease.” (lines 27-28)
- (3) “Christensen says companies should ideally hire an in-house behavioral expert to oversee a pet-at-work policy...” (lines 37-38)
- (4) “Before more offices throw open their doors to dogs will-nilly and more pets start tagging along on the morning commute, we should learn how to better listen to them. They might be asking to stay at home.” (lines 46-48)

Name _____ Date _____

English 11 Interim Assessment 2
Reading Comprehension and Argument Essay Answer and Scoring Sheet

Directions: Record your answers to multiple choice questions 1-10. Do not write below dotted line:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

TEACHER SCORING SECTION

Multiple Choice Score _____/10

MC Score % out of 100 _____

MC = 40% of Assessment Score

Essay Score on Rubric _____/6

Essay Score % out of 100 _____

(6 = 100, 5 = 90, 4 = 80, 3 = 70, 2 = 60, 1 = 50)

Essay = 60% of Assessment Score

Student Interim Assessment #2 Final Score:

Comments _____



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

New York State Regents Examination in English Language Arts (Common Core)

Part 3 Rubric

Text Analysis: Exposition

Criteria	Responses at this Level: 4	Responses at this Level: 3	Responses at this Level: 2	Responses at this Level: 1
Content and Analysis: the extent to which the response conveys complex ideas and information clearly and accurately in order to respond to the task and support an analysis of the text	-introduce a well-reasoned central idea and a writing strategy that clearly establish the criteria for analysis -demonstrate a thoughtful analysis of the author's use of the writing strategy to develop the central idea	-introduce a clear central idea and a writing strategy that establish the criteria for analysis -demonstrate an appropriate analysis of the author's use of the writing strategy to develop the central idea	-introduce a central idea and/or a writing strategy -demonstrate a superficial analysis of the author's use of the writing strategy to develop the central idea	-introduce a confused or incomplete central idea or writing strategy and/or -demonstrate a minimal analysis of the author's use of the writing strategy to develop the central idea
Command of Evidence: the extent to which the response presents evidence from the provided text to support analysis	-present ideas clearly and consistently, making effective use of specific and relevant evidence to support analysis	-present ideas sufficiently, making adequate use of relevant evidence to support analysis	-present ideas inconsistently, inadequately, and/or inaccurately in an attempt to support analysis, making use of some evidence that may be irrelevant	-present little or no evidence from the text
Coherence, Organization, and Style: the extent to which the response logically organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information using formal style and precise language	-exhibit logical organization of ideas and information to create a cohesive and coherent response -establish and maintain a formal style, using precise language and sound structure	-exhibit acceptable organization of ideas and information to create a coherent response -establish and maintain a formal style, using appropriate language and structure	-exhibit inconsistent organization of ideas and information, failing to create a coherent response -lack a formal style, using language that is basic, inappropriate, or imprecise	-exhibit little organization of ideas and information -use language that is predominantly incoherent, inappropriate, or copied directly from the task or text -are minimal, making assessment unreliable
Control of Conventions: the extent to which the response demonstrates command of conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling	-demonstrate control of the conventions with infrequent errors	-demonstrate partial control of conventions with occasional errors that do not hinder comprehension	-demonstrate emerging control of conventions with some errors that hinder comprehension	-demonstrate a lack of control of conventions with frequent errors that make comprehension difficult -are minimal, making assessment of conventions unreliable

- A response that is a personal response and makes little or no reference to the task or text can be scored no higher than a 1.
- A response that is totally copied from the text with no original writing must be given a 0.
- A response that is totally unrelated to the task, illegible, incoherent, blank, or unrecognizable as English must be scored as a 0.

A Good Man Is Hard To Find

Flannery O'Connor

The grandmother didn't want to go to Florida. She wanted to visit some of her connections in east Tennessee and she was seizing at every chance to change Bailey's mind. Bailey was the son she lived with, her only boy. He was sitting on the edge of his chair at the table, bent over the orange sports section of the Journal. "Now look here, Bailey," she said, "see here, read this," and she stood with one hand on her thin hip and the other rattling the newspaper at his bald head. "Here this fellow that calls himself The Misfit is a loose from the Federal Pen and headed toward Florida and you read here what it says he did to these people. Just you read it. I wouldn't take my children in any direction with a criminal like that a loose in it. I couldn't answer to my conscience if I did."

Bailey didn't look up from his reading so she wheeled around then and faced the children's mother, a young woman in slacks, whose face was as broad and innocent as a cabbage and was tied around with a green head-kerchief that had two points on the top like rabbit's ears. She was sitting on the sofa, feeding the baby his apricots out of a jar. "The children have been to Florida before," the old lady said. "You all ought to take them somewhere else for a change so they would see different parts of the world and be broad. They never have been to east Tennessee."

The children's mother didn't seem to hear her but the eight-year-old boy, John Wesley, a stocky child with glasses, said, "If you don't want to go to Florida, why don'tcha stay at home?" He and the little girl, June Star, were reading the funny papers on the floor.

"She wouldn't stay at home to be queen for a day," June Star said without raising her yellow head.

"Yes and what would you do if this fellow, The Misfit, caught you?" the grandmother asked.

"I'd smack his face," John Wesley said.

"She wouldn't stay at home for a million bucks," June Star said. "Afraid she'd miss something. She has to go everywhere we go."

"All right, Miss," the grandmother said. "Just remember that the next time you want me to curl your hair."

June Star said her hair was naturally curly.

The next morning the grandmother was the first one in the car, ready to go. She had her big black valise that looked like the head of a hippopotamus in one corner, and underneath it she was hiding a basket with Pitty Sing, the cat, in it. She didn't intend for the cat to be left alone in the house for three days because he would miss her too much and she was afraid he might brush against one of her gas burners and accidentally asphyxiate himself. Her son, Bailey, didn't like to arrive at a motel with a cat.

She sat in the middle of the back seat with John Wesley and June Star on either side of her. Bailey and the children's mother and the baby sat in front and they left Atlanta at eight forty-five with the mileage on the car at 55890. The grandmother wrote this down because she thought it would be interesting to say how many miles they had been when they got back. It took them twenty minutes to reach the outskirts of the city.

The old lady settled herself comfortably, removing her white cotton gloves and putting them up with her purse on the shelf in front of the back window. The children's mother still had on slacks and still had her head tied up in a green kerchief, but the grandmother had on a navy blue straw sailor hat with a bunch of white violets on the brim and a navy blue dress with a small white dot in the print. Her collars and cuffs were white organdy trimmed with lace and at her neckline she had pinned a purple spray of cloth violets containing a sachet. In case of an accident, anyone seeing her dead on the highway would know at once that she was a lady.

She said she thought it was going to be a good day for driving, neither too hot nor too cold, and she cautioned Bailey that the speed limit was fifty-five miles an hour and that the patrolmen hid themselves behind billboards and small clumps of trees and sped out after you before you had a chance to slow down. She pointed out interesting details of the scenery: Stone Mountain; the blue granite that in some places came up to both sides of the highway; the brilliant red clay banks slightly streaked with purple; and the various crops that made rows of green lace-work on the ground. The trees were full of silver-white sunlight and the meanest of them sparkled. The children were reading comic magazines and their mother and gone back to sleep.

"Let's go through Georgia fast so we won't have to look at it much," John Wesley said.

"If I were a little boy," said the grandmother, "I wouldn't talk about my native state that way. Tennessee has the mountains and Georgia has the hills."

"Tennessee is just a hillbilly dumping ground," John Wesley said, "and Georgia is a lousy state too."

"You said it," June Star said.

"In my time," said the grandmother, folding her thin veined fingers, "children were more respectful of their native states and their parents and everything else. People did right then. Oh look at the cute little pickaninny!" she said and pointed to a Negro child standing in the door of a shack. "Wouldn't that make a picture, now?" she asked and they all turned and looked at the little Negro out of the back window. He waved

"He didn't have any britches on," June Star said.

"He probably didn't have any," the grandmother explained. "Little riggers in the country don't have things like we do. If I could paint, I'd paint that picture," she said.

The children exchanged comic books.

The grandmother offered to hold the baby and the children's mother passed him over the front seat to her. She set him on her knee and bounced him and told him about the things they were passing. She rolled her eyes and screwed up her mouth and stuck her leathery thin face into his smooth bland one. Occasionally he gave her a faraway smile. They passed a large cotton field with five or six graves fenced in the middle of it, like a small island. "Look at the graveyard!" the grandmother said, pointing it out. "That was the old family burying ground. That belonged to the plantation."

"Where's the plantation?" John Wesley asked.

"Gone With the Wind" said the grandmother. "Ha. Ha."

When the children finished all the comic books they had brought, they opened the lunch and ate it. The grandmother ate a peanut butter sandwich and an olive and would not let the children throw the box and the paper napkins out the window. When there was nothing else to do they played a game by choosing a cloud and making the other two guess what shape it suggested. John Wesley took one the shape of a cow and June Star guessed a cow and John Wesley said, no, an automobile, and June Star said he didn't play fair, and they began to slap each other over the grandmother.

The grandmother said she would tell them a story if they would keep quiet. When she told a story, she rolled her eyes and waved her head and was very dramatic. She said once when she was a maiden lady she had been courted by a Mr. Edgar Atkins Teagarden from Jasper, Georgia. She said he was a very good-looking man and a gentleman and that he brought her a watermelon every Saturday afternoon with his initials cut in it, E. A. T. Well, one Saturday, she said, Mr. Teagarden brought the watermelon and there was nobody at home and he left it on the front porch and returned in his buggy to Jasper, but she never got the watermelon, she said, because a nigger boy ate it when he saw the initials, E. A. T. ! This story tickled John Wesley's funny bone and he giggled and giggled but June Star didn't think it was any good. She said she wouldn't marry a man that just brought her a watermelon on Saturday. The grandmother said she would have done well to marry Mr. Teagarden because he was a gentle man and had bought Coca-Cola stock when it first came out and that he had died only a few years ago, a very wealthy man.

They stopped at The Tower for barbecued sand- wiches. The Tower was a part stucco and part wood filling station and dance hall set in a clearing outside of Timothy. A fat man named Red Sammy Butts ran it and there were signs stuck here and there on the building and for miles up and down the highway saying, TRY RED SAMMY'S FAMOUS BARBECUE. NONE LIKE FAMOUS RED SAMMY'S! RED SAM! THE FAT BOY WITH THE HAPPY LAUGH. A VETERAN! RED SAMMY'S YOUR MAN!

Red Sammy was lying on the bare ground outside The Tower with his head under a truck while a gray monkey about a foot high, chained to a small chinaberry tree, chattered nearby. The monkey sprang back into the tree and got on the highest limb as soon as he saw the children jump out of the car and run toward him.

Inside, The Tower was a long dark room with a counter at one end and tables at the other and dancing space in the middle. They all sat down at a board table next to the nickelodeon and Red Sam's wife, a tall burnt-brown woman with hair and eyes lighter than her skin, came and took their order. The children's mother put a dime in the machine and played "The Tennessee Waltz," and the grandmother said that tune always made her want to dance. She asked Bailey if he would like to dance but he only glared at her. He didn't have a naturally sunny disposition like she did and trips made him nervous. The grandmother's brown eyes were very bright. She swayed her head from side to side and pretended she was dancing in her chair. June Star said play something she could tap to so the children's mother put in another dime and played a fast number and June Star stepped out onto the dance floor and did her tap routine.

"Ain't she cute?" Red Sam's wife said, leaning over the counter. "Would you like to come be my little girl?"

"No I certainly wouldn't," June Star said. "I wouldn't live in a broken-down place like this for a million bucks!" and she ran back to the table.

"Ain't she cute?" the woman repeated, stretching her mouth politely.

"Arn't you ashamed?" hissed the grandmother.

Red Sam came in and told his wife to quit lounging on the counter and hurry up with these people's order. His khaki trousers reached just to his hip bones and his stomach hung over them like a sack of meal swaying under his shirt. He came over and sat down at a table nearby and let out a combination sigh and yodel. "You can't win," he said. "You can't win," and he wiped his sweating red face off with a gray handkerchief. "These days you don't know who to trust," he said. "Ain't that the truth?"

"People are certainly not nice like they used to be," said the grandmother.

"Two fellers come in here last week," Red Sammy said, "driving a Chrysler. It was a old beat-up car but it was a good one and these boys looked all right to me. Said they worked at the mill and you know I let them fellers charge the gas they bought? Now why did I do that?"

"Because you're a good man!" the grandmother said at once.

"Yes'm, I suppose so," Red Sam said as if he were struck with this answer.

His wife brought the orders, carrying the five plates all at once without a tray, two in each hand and one balanced on her arm. "It isn't a soul in this green world of God's that you can trust," she said. "And I don't count nobody out of that, not nobody," she repeated, looking at Red Sammy.

"Did you read about that criminal, The Misfit, that's escaped?" asked the grandmother.

"I wouldn't be a bit surprised if he didn't attack this place right here," said the woman. "If he hears about it being here, I wouldn't be none surprised to see him. If he hears it's two cent in the cash register, I wouldn't be a tall surprised if he . . ."

"That'll do," Red Sam said. "Go bring these people their Co'-Colas," and the woman went off to get the rest of the order.

"A good man is hard to find," Red Sammy said. "Everything is getting terrible. I remember the day you could go off and leave your screen door unlatched. Not no more."

He and the grandmother discussed better times. The old lady said that in her opinion Europe was entirely to blame for the way things were now. She said the way Europe acted you would think we were made of money and Red Sam said it was no use talking about it, she was exactly right. The children ran outside into the white sunlight and looked at the monkey in the lacy chinaberry tree. He was busy catching fleas on himself and biting each one carefully between his teeth as if it were a delicacy.

They drove off again into the hot afternoon. The grandmother took cat naps and woke up every few minutes with her own snoring. Outside of Toombsboro she woke up and recalled an old plantation that she had visited in this neighborhood once when she was a young lady. She said the house had six white columns across the front and that there was an avenue of oaks leading up to it and two little wooden trellis arbors on either side in front where you sat down with your suitor after a stroll in the garden. She recalled exactly which road to turn off to get to it. She knew that Bailey would not be willing to lose any time looking at an old house, but the more she talked about it, the more she wanted to see it once again and find out if the little twin arbors were still standing. "There was a secret:-panel in this house," she said craftily, not telling the truth but wishing that she were, "and the story went that all the family silver was hidden in it when Sherman came through but it was never found . . ."

"Hey!" John Wesley said. "Let's go see it! We'll find it! We'll poke all the woodwork and find it! Who lives there? Where do you turn off at? Hey Pop, can't we turn off there?"

"We never have seen a house with a secret panel!" June Star shrieked. "Let's go to the house with the secret panel! Hey Pop, can't we go see the house with the secret panel!"

"It's not far from here, I know," the grandmother said. "It wouldn't take over twenty minutes."

Bailey was looking straight ahead. His jaw was as rigid as a horseshoe. "No," he said.

The children began to yell and scream that they wanted to see the house with the secret panel. John Wesley kicked the back of the front seat and June Star hung over her mother's shoulder and whined desperately into her ear that they never had any fun even on their vacation, that they could never do what THEY wanted to do. The baby began to scream and John Wesley kicked the back of the seat so hard that his father could feel the blows in his kidney.

"All right!" he shouted and drew the car to a stop at the side of the road. "Will you all shut up? Will you all just shut up for one second? If you don't shut up, we won't go anywhere."

"It would be very educational for them," the grandmother murmured.

"All right," Bailey said, "but get this: this is the only time we're going to stop for anything like this. This is the one and only time."

"The dirt road that you have to turn down is about a mile back," the grandmother directed. "I marked it when we passed."

"A dirt road," Bailey groaned.

After they had turned around and were headed toward the dirt road, the grandmother recalled other points about the house, the beautiful glass over the front doorway and the candle-lamp in the hall. John Wesley said that the secret panel was probably in the fireplace.

"You can't go inside this house," Bailey said. "You don't know who lives there."

"While you all talk to the people in front, I'll run around behind and get in a window," John Wesley suggested.

"We'll all stay in the car," his mother said.

They turned onto the dirt road and the car raced roughly along in a swirl of pink dust. The grandmother recalled the times when there were no paved roads and thirty miles was a day's journey. The dirt road was hilly and there were sudden washes in it and sharp curves on dangerous embankments. All at once they would be on a hill, looking down over the blue tops of trees for miles around, then the next minute, they would be in a red depression with the dust-coated trees looking down on them.

"This place had better turn up in a minute," Bailey said, "or I'm going to turn around."

The road looked as if no one had traveled on it in months.

"It's not much farther," the grandmother said and just as she said it, a horrible thought came to her. The thought was so embarrassing that she turned red in the face and her eyes dilated and her feet jumped up, upsetting her valise in the corner. The instant the valise moved, the newspaper top she had over the basket under it rose with a snarl and Pitty Sing, the cat, sprang onto Bailey's shoulder.

The children were thrown to the floor and their mother, clutching the baby, was thrown out the door onto the ground; the old lady was thrown into the front seat. The car turned over once and landed right-side-up in a gulch off the side of the road. Bailey remained in the driver's seat with the cat gray-striped with a broad white face and an orange nose clinging to his neck like a caterpillar.

As soon as the children saw they could move their arms and legs, they scrambled out of the car, shouting, "We've had an ACCIDENT!" The grandmother was curled up under the dashboard, hoping she was injured so that Bailey's wrath would not come down on her all at once. The horrible thought she had had before the accident was that the house she had remembered so vividly was not in Georgia but in Tennessee.

Bailey removed the cat from his neck with both hands and flung it out the window against the side of a pine tree. Then he got out of the car and started looking for the children's mother. She was sitting against the side of the red gutted ditch, holding the screaming baby, but she only had a cut down her face and a broken shoulder. "We've had an ACCIDENT!" the children screamed in a frenzy of delight.

"But nobody's killed," June Star said with disappointment as the grandmother limped out of the car, her hat still pinned to her head but the broken front brim standing up at a jaunty angle and the violet spray hanging off the side. They all sat down in the ditch, except the children, to recover from the shock. They were all shaking.

"Maybe a car will come along," said the children's mother hoarsely.

"I believe I have injured an organ," said the grandmother, pressing her side, but no one answered her. Bailey's teeth were clattering. He had on a yellow sport shirt with bright blue parrots designed in it and his face was as yellow as the shirt. The grandmother decided that she would not mention that the house was in Tennessee.

The road was about ten feet above and they could see only the tops of the trees on the other side of it. Behind the ditch they were sitting in there were more woods, tall and dark and deep. In a few minutes they saw a car some distance away on top of a hill, coming slowly as if the occupants were watching them. The grandmother stood up and waved both arms dramatically to attract their attention. The car continued to come on slowly, disappeared around a bend and appeared again, moving even slower, on top of the hill they had gone over. It was a big black battered hearselike automobile. There were three men in it.

It came to a stop just over them and for some minutes, the driver looked down with a steady expressionless gaze to where they were sitting, and didn't speak. Then he turned his head and muttered something to the other two and they got out. One was a fat boy in black trousers and a red sweat shirt with a silver stallion embossed on the front of it. He moved around on the right side of them and stood staring, his mouth partly open in a kind of loose grin. The other had on khaki pants and a blue striped coat and a gray hat pulled down very low, hiding most of his face. He came around slowly on the left side. Neither spoke.

The driver got out of the car and stood by the side of it, looking down at them. He was an older man than the other two. His hair was just beginning to gray and he wore silver-rimmed spectacles that gave him a scholarly look. He had a long creased face and didn't have on any shirt or undershirt. He had on blue jeans that were too tight for him and was holding a black hat and a gun. The two boys also had guns.

"We've had an ACCIDENT!" the children screamed.

The grandmother had the peculiar feeling that the bespectacled man was someone she knew. His face was as familiar to her as if she had known him all her life but she could not recall who he was. He moved away from the car and began to come down the embankment, placing his feet carefully so that he wouldn't slip. He had on tan and white shoes and no socks, and his ankles were red and thin. "Good afternoon," he said. "I see you all had you a little spill."

"We turned over twice!" said the grandmother.

"Once", he corrected. "We seen it happen. Try their car and see will it run, Hiram," he said quietly to the boy with the gray hat.

"What you got that gun for?" John Wesley asked. "Whatcha gonna do with that gun?"

"Lady," the man said to the children's mother, "would you mind calling them children to sit down by you? Children make me nervous. I want all you all to sit down right together there where you're at."

"What are you telling US what to do for?" June Star asked.

Behind them the line of woods gaped like a dark open mouth. "Come here," said their mother.

"Look here now," Bailey began suddenly, "we're in a predicament! We're in . . ."

The grandmother shrieked. She scrambled to her feet and stood staring. "You're The Misfit!" she said. "I recognized you at once!"

"Yes'm," the man said, smiling slightly as if he were pleased in spite of himself to be known, "but it would have been better for all of you, lady, if you hadn't of reckernized me."

Bailey turned his head sharply and said something to his mother that shocked even the children. The old lady began to cry and The Misfit reddened.

"Lady," he said, "don't you get upset. Sometimes a man says things he don't mean. I don't reckon he meant to talk to you thataway."

"You wouldn't shoot a lady, would you?" the grandmother said and removed a clean handkerchief from her cuff and began to slap at her eyes with it.

The Misfit pointed the toe of his shoe into the ground and made a little hole and then covered it up again. "I would hate to have to," he said.

"Listen," the grandmother almost screamed, "I know you're a good man. You don't look a bit like you have common blood. I know you must come from nice people!"

"Yes mam," he said, "finest people in the world." When he smiled he showed a row of strong white teeth. "God never made a finer woman than my mother and my daddy's heart was pure gold," he said. The boy with the red sweat shirt had come around behind them and was standing with his gun at his hip. The Misfit squatted down on the ground. "Watch them children, Bobby Lee," he said. "You know they make me nervous." He looked at the six of them huddled together in front of him and he seemed to be embarrassed as if he couldn't think of anything to say. "Ain't a cloud in the sky," he remarked, looking up at it. "Don't see no sun but don't see no cloud neither."

"Yes, it's a beautiful day," said the grandmother. "Listen," she said, "you shouldn't call yourself The Misfit because I know you're a good man at heart. I can just look at you and tell."

"Hush!" Bailey yelled. "Hush! Everybody shut up and let me handle this!" He was squatting in the position of a runner about to sprint forward but he didn't move.

"I pre-chate that, lady," The Misfit said and drew a little circle in the ground with the butt of his gun.

"It'll take a half a hour to fix this here car," Hiram called, looking over the raised hood of it.

"Well, first you and Bobby Lee get him and that little boy to step over yonder with you," The Misfit said, pointing to Bailey and John Wesley. "The boys want to ast you something," he said to Bailey. "Would you mind stepping back in them woods there with them?"

"Listen," Bailey began, "we're in a terrible predicament! Nobody realizes what this is," and his voice cracked. His eyes were as blue and intense as the parrots in his shirt and he remained perfectly still.

The grandmother reached up to adjust her hat brim as if she were going to the woods with him but it came off in her hand. She stood staring at it and after a second she let it fall on the ground. Hiram pulled Bailey up by the arm as if he were assisting an old man. John Wesley caught hold of his father's hand and Bobby Lee followed. They went off toward the woods and just as they reached the dark edge, Bailey turned and supporting himself against a gray naked pine trunk, he shouted, "I'll be back in a minute, Mamma, wait on me!"

"Come back this instant!" his mother shrilled but they all disappeared into the woods.

"Bailey Boy!" the grandmother called in a tragic voice but she found she was looking at The Misfit squatting on the ground in front of her. "I just know you're a good man," she said desperately. "You're not a bit common!"

"Nome, I ain't a good man," The Misfit said after a second ah if he had considered her statement carefully, "but I ain't the worst in the world neither. My daddy said I was a different breed of dog from my brothers and sisters. 'You know,' Daddy said, 'it's some that can live their whole life out without asking about it and it's others has to know why it is, and this boy is one of the latters. He's going to be into everything!'" He put on his black hat and looked up suddenly and then away deep into the woods as if he were embarrassed again. "I'm sorry I don't have on a shirt before you ladies," he said, hunching his shoulders slightly. "We buried our clothes that we had on when we escaped and we're just making do until we can get better. We borrowed these from some folks we met," he explained.

"That's perfectly all right," the grandmother said. "Maybe Bailey has an extra shirt in his suitcase."

"I'll look and see terrectly," The Misfit said.

"Where are they taking him?" the children's mother screamed.

"Daddy was a card himself," The Misfit said. "You couldn't put anything over on him. He never got in trouble with the Authorities though. Just had the knack of handling them."

"You could be honest too if you'd only try," said the grandmother. "Think how wonderful it would be to settle down and live a comfortable life and not have to think about somebody chasing you all the time."

The Misfit kept scratching in the ground with the butt of his gun as if he were thinking about it. "Yestm, somebody is always after you," he murmured.

The grandmother noticed how thin his shoulder blades were just behind his hat because she was standing up looking down on him. "Do you every pray?" she asked.

He shook his head. All she saw was the black hat wiggle between his shoulder blades. "Nome," he said.

There was a pistol shot from the woods, followed closely by another. Then silence. The old lady's head jerked around. She could hear the wind move through the tree tops like a long satisfied insuck of breath. "Bailey Boy!" she called.

"I was a gospel singer for a while," The Misfit said. "I been most everything. Been in the arm service both land and sea, at home and abroad, been twict married, been an undertaker, been with the railroads, plowed Mother Earth, been in a tornado, seen a man burnt alive oncet," and he looked up at the children's mother and the little girl who were sitting close together, their faces white and their eyes glassy; "I even seen a woman flogged," he said.

"Pray, pray," the grandmother began, "pray, pray . . ."

I never was a bad boy that I remember of," The Misfit said in an almost dreamy voice, "but somewheres along the line I done something wrong and got sent to the penitentiary. I was buried alive," and he looked up and held her attention to him by a steady stare.

"That's when you should have started to pray," she said. "What did you do to get sent to the penitentiary that first time?"

"Turn to the right, it was a wall," The Misfit said, looking up again at the cloudless sky. "Turn to the left, it was a wall. Look up it was a ceiling, look down it was a floor. I forget what I done, lady. I set there and set there, trying to remember what it was I done and I ain't recalled it to this day. Oncet in a while, I would think it was coming to me, but it never come."

"Maybe they put you in by mistake," the old lady said vaguely.

"Nome," he said. "It wasn't no mistake. They had the papers on me."

"You must have stolen something," she said.

The Misfit sneered slightly. "Nobody had nothing I wanted," he said. "It was a head-doctor at the penitentiary said what I had done was kill my daddy but I known that for a lie. My daddy died in nineteen ought nineteen of the epidemic flu and I never had a thing to do with it. He was buried in the Mount Hopewell Baptist churchyard and you can go there and see for yourself."

"If you would pray," the old lady said, "Jesus would help you."

"That's right," The Misfit said.

"Well then, why don't you pray?" she asked trembling with delight suddenly.

"I don't want no hep," he said. "I'm doing all right by myself."

Bobby Lee and Hiram came ambling back from the woods. Bobby Lee was dragging a yellow shirt with bright blue parrots in it.

"Thow me that shirt, Bobby Lee," The Misfit said. The shirt came flying at him and landed on his shoulder and he put it on. The grandmother couldn't name what the shirt reminded her of. "No, lady," The Misfit said while he was buttoning it up, "I found out the crime don't matter. You can do one thing or you can do another, kill a man or take a tire off his car, because sooner or later you're going to forget what it was you done and just be punished for it."

The children's mother had begun to make heaving noises as if she couldn't get her breath. "Lady," he asked, "would you and that little girl like to step off yonder with Bobby Lee and Hiram and join your husband?"

"Yes, thank you," the mother said faintly. Her left arm dangled helplessly and she was holding the baby, who had gone to sleep, in the other. "Hep that lady up, Hiram," The Misfit said as she struggled to climb out of the ditch, "and Bobby Lee, you hold onto that little girl's hand."

"I don't want to hold hands with him," June Star said. "He reminds me of a pig."

The fat boy blushed and laughed and caught her by the arm and pulled her off into the woods after Hiram and her mother.

Alone with The Misfit, the grandmother found that she had lost her voice. There was not a cloud in the sky nor any sun. There was nothing around her but woods. She wanted to tell him that he must pray. She opened and closed her mouth several times before anything came out. Finally she found herself saying, "Jesus. Jesus," meaning, Jesus will help you, but the way she was saying it, it sounded as if she might be cursing.

"Yes'm, The Misfit said as if he agreed. "Jesus shown everything off balance. It was the same case with Him as with me except He hadn't committed any crime and they could prove I had committed one because they had the papers on me. Of course," he said, "they never shown me my papers. That's why I sign myself now. I said long ago, you get you a signature and sign everything you do and keep a copy of it. Then you'll know what you done and you can hold up the crime to the punishment and see do they match and in the end you'll have something to prove you ain't been treated right. I call myself The Misfit," he said, "because I can't make what all I done wrong fit what all I gone through in punishment."

There was a piercing scream from the woods, followed closely by a pistol report. "Does it seem right to you, lady, that one is punished a heap and another ain't punished at all?"

"Jesus!" the old lady cried. "You've got good blood! I know you wouldn't shoot a lady! I know you come from nice people! Pray! Jesus, you ought not to shoot a lady. I'll give you all the money I've got!"

"Lady," The Misfit said, looking beyond her far into the woods, "there never was a body that give the undertaker a tip."

There were two more pistol reports and the grandmother raised her head like a parched old turkey hen crying for water and called, "Bailey Boy, Bailey Boy!" as if her heart would break.

"Jesus was the only One that ever raised the dead," The Misfit continued, "and He shouldn't have done it. He shown everything off balance. If He did what He said, then it's nothing for you to do but thow away everything and follow Him, and if He didn't, then it's nothing for you to do but enjoy the few minutes you got left the best way you can by killing somebody or burning down his house or doing some other meanness to him. No pleasure but meanness," he said and his voice had become almost a snarl.

"Maybe He didn't raise the dead," the old lady mumbled, not knowing what she was saying and feeling so dizzy that she sank down in the ditch with her legs twisted under her.

"I wasn't there so I can't say He didn't," The Misfit said. "I wisht I had of been there," he said, hitting the ground with his fist. "It ain't right I wasn't there because if I had of been there I would of known. Listen lady," he said in a high voice, "if I had of been there I would of known and I wouldn't be like I am now." His voice seemed about to crack and the grandmother's head cleared for an instant. She saw the man's face twisted close to her own as if he were going to cry and she murmured, "Why you're one of my babies. You're one of my own children !" She reached out and touched him on the shoulder. The Misfit sprang back as if a snake had bitten him and shot her three times through the chest. Then he put his gun down on the ground and took off his glasses and began to clean them.

Hiram and Bobby Lee returned from the woods and stood over the ditch, looking down at the grandmother who half sat and half lay in a puddle of blood with her legs crossed under her like a child's and her face smiling up at the cloudless sky.

Without his glasses, The Misfit's eyes were red-rimmed and pale and defenseless-looking. "Take her off and thow her where you thown the others," he said, picking up the cat that was rubbing itself against his leg.

"She was a talker, wasn't she?" Bobby Lee said, sliding down the ditch with a yodel.

"She would of been a good woman," The Misfit said, "if it had been somebody there to shoot her every minute of her life."

"Some fun!" Bobby Lee said.

"Shut up, Bobby Lee," The Misfit said. "It's no real pleasure in life."

“A Good Man is Hard to Find” by Flannery O’Connor

Directions: Based on our reading and discussion of this short story, answer the following questions using at least **THREE – FIVE** complete sentences. This is a graded assignment so put forth a quality effort. You are expected to bring in quotes from the text and your own insightful commentary as part of your responses.

1. What can you infer about the grandmother by reading the opening paragraph? What does she represent in the story? How does she represent the Old South? What does the grandmother mean when she tells The Misfit, “Why, you’re one of my babies. You’re one of my own children”?
2. The main characters in a story usually have names. In this story, however, several main characters – The Misfit, the grandmother, and the children’s mother – are unnamed. What is the purpose of not giving these characters names, referring to them only by their roles? How might leaving these characters unnamed connect to the **theme** of the story?
3. In what ways is the family in this story fairly typical in terms of the tensions and conflicts most families experience? How does Flannery O’Connor introduce comedy by showing the differences between the adults and children?
4. Describe the **setting** of Red Sammy’s. What is the significance of the conversation between Red Sammy and the grandmother? What does she mean when she says, a good man is hard to find”? Why in the final scene does the grandmother repeatedly tell The Misfit that she knows he’s a “good man”?
5. What did you think about the violence in the story? Why do you think O’Connor chose to leave some of the murders out of sight, but allowed the reader to “witness” the final murder? What is important about providing **details** about the last murder? Include some of those details and explain their importance.
6. How does O’Connor use **foreshadowing** in the story? Include some examples from the story. When you read about The Misfit in the first paragraph, did you
7. Explain how the **setting** shifts once the family takes a detour off the main road. Why is this shift important to the story? How does the **tone** of the story begin to shift? Include quotes from the story as part of your answer.

8. We follow the grandmother's **point of view** throughout most of the story. When does the story move away from this perspective? Why is this important? Include quotes from the text to support your answer.
9. Since the story takes place in the South, the **diction** used in the story is very significant. Include some examples of this Southern diction and explain their meaning.
10. Discuss how O'Connor plays out her **theme** of the struggle between good and evil in the characters of the grandmother and The Misfit. Explore the ways that each of these characters represent the elements of both good and evil.
11. What are the elements of the **grotesque** in the story? Include examples from the story and explain their importance. How is the story funny and frightening? What elements of the story are distorted from the normal?
12. What did you think of the story? Include details to support your honest views of the story.