

Comprehension Check

- He is anticipating the arrival of an enemy in an armored car on the street below.
- The other gunman shoots him.
- The sniper tricks the gunman into believing that the gunman has killed him by dropping his hat and letting his arm fall over the ledge.

1. Some may describe a range of emotional states, including sadness, anger, indignation, or outrage.

2. Possible Responses: Some may say that if the sniper believes in his cause, he has no choice but to kill or be killed.

3. Possible Response: The sniper might say that the old woman is an informer on the enemy side and thus a legitimate target.

4. Possible Responses: The sniper believes in his political cause, as evidenced by “the cold gleam of the fanatic” in his eyes. Each time he kills, he feels an immediate exhilaration, knowing he will be safe for awhile longer. But finally he feels revulsion at his deeds, “cursing the war, cursing himself, cursing everybody.”

5. Possible Responses: the flash from the opposite side of the street, the sniper saying “I’m hit,” but not describing his injury for several more sentences

6. Critic's Corner Some may note the constantly shifting emotional state of this character. At the beginning, his eyes have the "cold gleam of the fanatic"; he is totally involved in his cause. He becomes increasingly excited when the armored car appears, is shocked and angry when he is injured; then in his pain he is resolved to survive. He becomes eager, exhilarated, and joyful as he kills his enemy; then, significantly, he is suddenly "bitten by remorse," revolted by the sight of his dead enemy, and begins cursing the war, himself, and everybody. Suddenly, accidentally discharging his gun, he is "frightened back to his senses"; his nerves become steady, and he laughs. He now takes a drink and feels reckless. Now he becomes curious about his dead victim, whom he admires as a "good shot." In this unheeding mood he moves into the story's revelation to experience the final shock, one that the reader can only infer.

7. **Connect to Life** Responses may include religious or political differences, divorce, criminal activity by a family member.