

The Sniper" Plot Summary "The Sniper" relates an encounter in downtown Dublin, near the O'Connell Bridge, between a sniper for the Republicans and a sniper for the Free Staters. Furthermore, from the last sentence of this short story, "then the sniper turned over the dead boy and looked into his brother's face," readers are able to identify and make out the conclusion that the Republican sniper has shot and killed his own blood related brother. This is the ultimate ironic situation because he unknowingly exterminates his loved one; who is also part of his beloved family. This short story is cleverly written in a way that uses irony to show the negative sides of war, such as misery, torture and regret, and how it breaks families apart. Technical Aspects Liam O'Flaherty uses his short story "The Sniper" to suggest to the readers that war is an evil obsession that makes brothers turn against brothers and this is intensified throughout the story by the clever usage of the setting, the situation irony and the theme or the moral of the story. The narrator in the story calls the sniper "young", "ascetic" and "fanatic" in the exposition. He is a soldier who has to carry out his orders of killing his enemies in cold blood, without any feelings of guilt or remorse. To show pain is for bidden. The sniper plans his actions minutely and is presented by the narrator as a watchful and diligent observer of the opponents' next steps. involved in that war ("cursing the war, cursing himself, cursing everybody" and feels guilty. All these images demonstrate isolation, desolation and the brutality formed by the war and the images are formed by intention to show the readers the identifiable harmful impacts that a war can carry. The Third Person Limited Point of View The setting and the situation irony plays an important role in building up the conflict of "The Sniper," however the third person limited point of view plays the major role. For instance, by introducing the main protagonist as "a Republican sniper lay watching," readers will connect the Republican sniper to a person they are close to or have ties with; making it more painful and shocking for readers in the end when the death of the sniper's brother is revealed. That is to say that he limits his narration to what is experienced, thought, and felt by the sniper who is in the centre of attention in the action and thus provides the "centre of consciousness". The narrator knows exactly what the protagonist is going to do next and observes him with a "camera-eye" technique. "His face was that of a student--thin and ascetic, but his eyes had the cold gleam of a fanatic . . . the eyes of a man who is used to looking at death" -----

----- It is a June evening, and the sniper, who has had nothing to eat since morning, hungrily wolfs down a sandwich and takes a short drink from the flask of whiskey he carries in his pocket. Irony The author not only uses the settings to intensify the evilness of war; but he also introduces several scenes of situation irony into the story to further explain the downside effects of war. Another ironic situation takes place when the Freestater soldier arrives at the O'Connell bridge in an armoured truck; a tank-like transportation machine, and yet he is killed by the Republican sniper when he peeks out the car window with half of his body outside. For example, "Dublin lay enveloped in darkness." The word "darkness" instantly creates a sense of insecurity and mystery in the readers' minds and as well as a suspenseful atmosphere. Throughout the entire story, O'Flaherty allows the readers to see the events through the eyes of the sniper and therefore readers will understand the negative impacts of war by cleverly using a third person limited point of view. "Around the beleaguered Four Courts the heavy guns roared. Here and there through the city machine guns and rifles broke the silence of the night, spasmodically like dogs barking on lone farm." In addition, when the

Republican drops to the ground after his injury, he leans against a parapet, which can also be explained as a protective barrier that the sniper uses to hide from all the cruelty and brutal faces of war. He takes two puffs of the cigarette and snuffs it. He raises himself to look over the parapet, but another bullet whizzes by his head, and he flattens himself against the roof. The Republican sniper aims his revolver at his opponent and fires. The Setting The story takes place in Dublin, and this city is described in a way that gives off depressing, suspenseful and pessimistic images; showing that war is an awful thing. In this sentence, the author identifies Dublin as a dangerous and insecure city, full of constant violence with the accompaniments of machine guns and rifles. Since the point of view is limited, the author is not informing the readers about the feelings of the Republican sniper when he turns over the dead body and realize that it is his brother. However the readers can easily make up assumptions about how the Republican sniper's emotions will be when he sees the face of his brother; emotions like tears washing his face with a sorrowful laugh. The author dedicates the entire first paragraph to describe the setting and to illustrate the atmosphere of the story.