

In the end, Wilson Rawls makes a decision to kill off two of the most important main characters (Lil' Ann and Old Dan) because he wanted to make a point of some kind. It would not have been hard to make a happy ending to this classic story. The family could have moved to the outskirts of town and still have been close enough to go to a good school yet far enough out to allow Billy to hunt, fish and play in the woods with his dogs.

Try your best to get into the mind of the author, Wilson Rawls, and **explain why you think he decided to end the story by eliminating the main characters. He may have had some lesson he wanted you to learn about life.** Ask yourself this too; if the story had ended happily ever after, would it still be a classic today, or would it not be memorable enough to become well known? It is a famous story because it is so sad. You as a young reader should appreciate this author for the way he is able to use words to play with your emotions. He brings you up and down, over and over, throughout the novel like a ride on a roller coaster. Yes it was sad at the end, but these dogs were never real in the first place. It's just a well-told story that never actually occurred. Now answer the question. **In your own personal opinion, why you think Rawls decided to end the story by eliminating the main characters? Use evidence from the story to support your opinion.**

Think about what you believe is the Theme of the story. Was there a lesson Wilson Rawls wanted you to learn?

**This is an OPINION paper.** Give your opinion why Wilson killed off the dogs, what lesson he wanted you to learn, and support your opinion with evidence based on things that happened in the story.

Write an opinion that demonstrates an understanding of topic (W.4.1)

Supply a reason for an opinion (W.4.1.b)

Produce coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience (W.4.4)

Use correct grammar when writing or speaking (L.4.1)

Use correct capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing (L.4.2)

Use details to explain text and make inferences (RL.4.1, RI.4.1)

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