Directions: The short story “The Sniper” is set in Dublin, Ireland, in the 1920s, during a time of bitter civil war. The Republicans, on one side, wanted all of Ireland to become a republic, totally free from British rule. The Free Staters, on the other side, were willing to allow continued English rule over six counties in the northern part of Ireland. Read the short story carefully and complete Task 1.

Vocabulary:
1. ascetic a person who renounces the comforts of society and leads a life of austere self-discipline, esp. as an act of religious devotion
2. beleaguered to be seized by being surrounded by troops or troubled
3. draught a gulp, swallow, or inhalation or the amount taken in by a single act of drinking or inhaling
4. fanatic a person possessed by an excessive zeal for and uncritical attachment to a cause or position
5. fleecy of, like, or covered with the coat of wool of a sheep or similar animal
6. gibber to prattle and chatter unintelligibly
7. iodine an element used as a topical antiseptic
8. parapet an earthen or stone embankment protecting soldiers from enemy fire, or a low wall around a roof
9. paroxysm a sudden outburst of emotion or action
10. recoil to draw, start, or shrink back, as in alarm, horror, or disgust
11. report an explosive noise from a gun
12. ruse an action or device meant to confuse or mislead 14. spasmodic occurring in spells and often abruptly
13. turret a low, heavily armored structure, usually rotating horizontally, containing mounted guns and their gunners or crew, as on a warship or tank

The Sniper By Liam O’Flaherty

The long June twilight faded into night. Dublin lay enveloped in darkness but for the dim light of the moon that shone through fleecy clouds, casting a pale light as of approaching dawn over the streets and the dark waters of the Liffey. 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 farms. Republicans and Free Staters were waging civil war. On a rooftop near O’Connell Bridge, a Republican sniper lay watching. Beside him lay his rifle and over his shoulders was slung a pair of field glasses. His face was the face of a student, thin and ascetic, but his eyes had the cold gleam of the fanatic. They were deep and thoughtful, the eyes of a man who is used to looking at death.

He was eating a sandwich hungrily. He had eaten nothing since morning. He had been too excited to eat. He finished the sandwich, and, taking a flask of whiskey from his pocket, he took a short drought. Then he returned the flask to his pocket. He paused for a moment, considering whether he should risk a smoke. It was dangerous. The flash might be seen in the darkness, and there were enemies watching. He decided to take the risk. Placing a cigarette between his lips, he struck a match, inhaled the smoke hurriedly and put out the light. Almost immediately, a bullet flattened itself against the parapet of the roof. The sniper took another whiff and put out the cigarette. Then he swore softly and crawled away to the left.

Cautiously he raised himself and peered over the parapet. There was a flash and a bullet whizzed over his head. He dropped immediately. He had seen the flash. It came from the opposite side of the street. He rolled over the roof to a chimney stack in the rear, and slowly drew himself up behind it, until his eyes
Circle one: CHS/Richards  WHS/Seldon  WHS/Edwards  ALC Miller

were level with the top of the parapet. There was nothing to be seen – just the dim outline of the opposite housetop against the blue sky. His enemy was under cover.

Just then an armoured car came across the bridge and advanced slowly up the street. It stopped on the opposite side of the street, fifty yards ahead. The sniper could hear the dull panting of the motor. His heart beat faster. It was an enemy car. He wanted to fire, but he knew it was useless. His bullets would never pierce the steel that covered the gray monster. Then round the corner of a side street came an old woman, her head covered by a tattered shawl. She began to talk to the man in the turret of the car. She was pointing to the roof where the sniper lay. An informer.

The turret opened. A man's head and shoulders appeared, looking toward the sniper. The sniper raised his rifle and fired. The head fell heavily on the turret wall. The woman darted toward the side street. The sniper fired again. The woman whirled round and fell with a shriek into the gutter. Suddenly from the opposite roof a shot rang out and the sniper dropped his rifle with a curse. The rifle clattered to the roof. The sniper thought the noise would wake the dead. He stooped to pick the rifle up. He couldn't lift it. His forearm was dead. "I'm hit," he muttered.

Dropping flat onto the roof, he crawled back to the parapet. With his left hand he felt the injured right forearm. The blood was oozing through the sleeve of his coat. There was no pain—just a deadened sensation, as if the arm had been cut off. Quickly he drew his knife from his pocket, opened it on the breastwork of the parapet, and ripped open the sleeve. There was a small hole where the bullet had entered. On the other side there was no hole. The bullet had lodged in the bone. It must have fractured it. He bent the arm below the wound. The arm bent back easily. He ground his teeth to overcome the pain. Then taking out his field dressing, he ripped open the packet with his knife. He broke the neck of the iodine bottle and let the bitter fluid drip into the wound. A paroxysm of pain swept through him. He placed the cotton wadding over the wound and wrapped the dressing over it. He tied the ends with his teeth. Then he lay still against the parapet, and, closing his eyes, he made an effort of will to overcome the pain. In the street beneath all was still. The armoured car had retired speedily over the bridge, with the machine gunner's head hanging lifeless over the turret.

The other sniper, seeing the cap and rifle fall, thought that he had killed his man. He was now standing before a row of chimney pots, looking across, with his head clearly silhouetted against the western sky. The Republican sniper smiled and lifted his revolver above the edge of the parapet. The distance was
about fifty yards – a hard shot in the dim light, and his right arm was paining him like a thousand devils. He took a steady aim. His hand trembled with eagerness. Pressing his lips together, he took a deep breath through his nostrils and fired. He was almost deafened with the report and his arm shook with the recoil. Then when the smoke cleared, he peered across and uttered a cry of joy. His enemy had been hit.

He was reeling over the parapet in his death agony. He struggled to keep his feet, but he was slowly falling forward as if in a dream. The rifle fell from his grasp, hit the parapet, fell over, bounded off the pole of a barber’s shop beneath and then clattered on the pavement. Then the dying man on the roof crumpled up and fell forward. The body turned over and over in space and hit the ground with a dull thud. Then it lay still.

The sniper looked at his enemy falling and he shuddered. The lust of battle died in him. He became bitten by remorse. The sweat stood out in beads on his forehead. Weakened by his wound and the long summer day of fasting and watching on the roof, he revolted from the sight of the shattered mass of his dead enemy. His teeth chattered, he began to gibber to himself, cursing the war, cursing himself, cursing everybody. He looked at the smoking revolver in his hand, and with an oath he hurled it to the roof at his feet.

The revolver went off with a concussion and the bullet whizzed past the sniper’s head. He was frightened back to his senses by the shock. His nerves steadied. The cloud of fear scattered from his mind and he laughed. Taking the whiskey flask from his pocket, he emptied it a drought. He felt reckless under the influence of the spirit. He decided to leave the roof now and look for his company commander, to report. Everywhere around was quiet. There was not much danger in going through the streets. He picked up his revolver and put it in his pocket. Then he crawled down through the skylight to the house underneath. When the sniper reached the laneway on the street level, he felt a sudden curiosity as to the identity of the enemy sniper whom he had killed. He decided that he was a good shot, whoever he was. He wondered did he know him.

Perhaps he had been in his own company before the split in the army. He decided to risk going over to have a look at him. He peered around the corner into O’Connell Street. In the upper part of the street there was heavy firing, but around here all was quiet. The sniper darted across the street. A machine gun tore up the ground around him with a hail of bullets, but he escaped. He threw himself face downward beside the corpse. The machine gun stopped. Then the sniper turned over the dead body and looked into his brother’s face.

Task 1: Analyzing Conflict in the text: The story ends ironically, we wouldn’t expect brothers to be fighting on opposing sides. Analyze these four excerpts from the story to determine why the author included them in the text.
on the roof, he revolted from the sight of the shattered mass of his dead enemy. His teeth chattered, he began to gibber to himself, cursing the war, cursing himself, cursing everybody.”. The sniper has succeeded in killing his enemy. Does this event create internal or external conflict? Explain why.

"Cautiously he raised himself and peered over the parapet. There was a flash and a bullet whizzed over his head.”. In this event, does the sniper experience internal or external conflict? Explain why.

"Then round the corner of a side street came an old woman, her head covered by a tattered shawl. She began to talk to the man in the turret of the car. She was pointing to the roof where the sniper lay. An informer.”. How does this section create suspense? Explain why.

Read the following: "He paused for a moment, considering whether he should risk a smoke. It was dangerous. The flash might be seen in the darkness, and there were enemies watching. He decided to take the risk.”. In this event, how does the author create both suspense and conflict?

**The Man He Killed.** (1902)- Thomas Hardy’s critique of the Boer Wars. They were incredibly violent between Great Britain and dutch colonies of South Africa. GB wanted the diamonds found on Boer land.

The poem is a **Dramatic Monologue** meaning it is supposed to sound like someone is speaking. This makes it feel like the readers are eavesdropping on the speakers conversation instead of the speaker talking directly to the audience.

**Task 2:** Read "The Man He Killed" By Thomas Hardy and complete the SOAPSTone

Had he and I but met

    By some old ancient inn,
    We should have set us down to wet
    Right many a nippurkin!

But ranged as infantry,

    And staring face to face,
    I shot at him as he at me,
And killed him in his place.

I shot him dead because--
Because he was my foe,
Just so: my foe of course he was;
That's clear enough; although

He thought he'd 'list, perhaps,
Off-hand like--just as I--
Was out of work--had sold his traps--
No other reason why.
Yes; quaint and curious war is!
You shoot a fellow down
You'd treat, if met where any bar is,
Or help to half a crown

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>The general topic, content, and ideas contained in the text. What is this piece about?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occasion</td>
<td>The time and place of the piece; the current situation or context which gave rise to the writing or speech.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>The group of readers to whom this piece is directed. The audience may be one person, a small group, or a large group. What qualities, beliefs, or values do the audience members have in common?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>The reason behind the text. What does the speaker, writer, or filmmaker want the audience to do, feel, say or choose? In literature, we call this the theme of the piece.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaker</td>
<td>The voice that tells the story. What do we know about the writer’s life and views that shape this text?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone</td>
<td>What choice of words and use of rhetorical devices let you know the speaker’s tone? Is the tone light-hearted or deadly serious? Mischievous or ironic?</td>
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Circle one: CHS/Richards  WHS/Seldon  WHS/Edwards  ALC Miller

Task 3: You have read “The Sniper” by Liam O’Flaherty and “The Man He Killed” by Thomas Hardy. Compare each author’s perspectives on war and the relationships between soldiers and their enemies in each text. Support your response with textual evidence. This should be a multi-paragraph response. You may use your book, poem analysis, and SOAPStone to support your response. This is due at the end of class.