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GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

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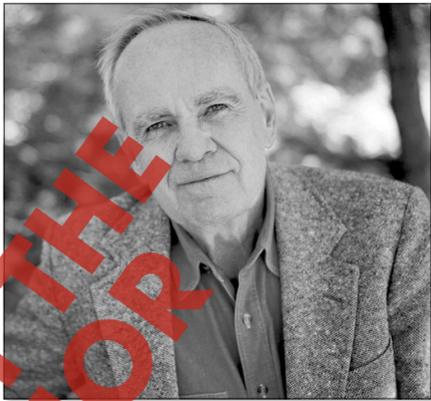
Cormac McCarthy

Cormac McCarthy was born in Rhode Island on July 20, 1933, the third of six children. At the age of four, he moved with his family to Knoxville, Tennessee.

Cormac was raised Roman Catholic, attending a Catholic High School. His studies in liberal arts at the University of Tennessee were interrupted by a four-year stint in the U.S. Air Force (1953–57). He finished University (having won the Ingram-Merrill Award for creative writing in 1959 and 1960 for his short fiction) and moved to Chicago in 1960, where he worked as an auto mechanic while writing his first novel.

Until the publication of *All the Pretty Horses* in 1992 (which sold 190,000 in hard cover in its first six months), McCarthy lived mostly on grants received from (among others) American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Rockefeller Foundation Grant, and the Guggenheim Fellowship for Creative Writing.

Some of the places Cormac McCarthy has lived in include Alaska, Ireland, England, France, Switzerland, Italy, and on the island of Ibiza,



Spain (the site of an artists' colony of sorts in the 1960s). Currently, McCarthy, his third wife Jennifer Winkley, and their son John Francis (born 1999) live in Tesque, New Mexico on the outskirts of Santa Fe. McCarthy is the writer in residence at the Santa Fe Institute.

Did You Know?

Cormac was born **Charles McCarthy** but changed his name to reflect his kinship with another famous Cormac McCarthy, the builder of Blarney Castle in Ireland.

- Until his retirement in 1993, Cormac McCarthy's editor was Albert Erskine, the man who edited all of William Faulkner's novels.
- In 1969, McCarthy and his second wife moved into a barn near Louisville, Kentucky that the author completely renovated himself. According to the former Mrs. McCarthy, her then-husband added a stone chimney and room. He also gathered and kiln-dried all the wood and gathered all the stones himself. He salvaged bricks for the renovation from the boyhood home of author, journalist, poet, and Knoxville native James Agee.
- His favorite novel is Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851).
- Most information about Cormac McCarthy is second hand, as he does not do interviews (as a rule) and dislikes talking about writing.



Section Two

(From the paragraph that starts with "Three nights later in the foothills..." to the paragraph that starts with "There was a skylight...")

Answer the questions in complete sentences.

1. If you were in the father's position in this story, would you deprive yourself to keep your child alive? Why or why not?

2. Why do you think the father keeps going on, after all the years of trying to survive?

Vocabulary

With a straight line, connect each word on the left with its meaning on the right.

1	escarpment	yellow flowers	A
2	switchbacks	hairpin turns	B
3	causeways	destroy by fire	C
4	jackknifed	wobble while walking	D
5	immolate	a long, precipitous, cliff-like ridge	E
6	primrose	raised roads or paths across low or wet ground	F
7	incandescence	taken from discarded material	G
8	waddle	scooped up water	H
9	scavenged	bent sharply in the middle	I
10	laved	light caused by heating something until it glows	J



Section Two

(From the paragraph that starts with "Three nights later in the foothills..." to the paragraph that starts with "There was a skylight...")

1. Circle **T** if the statement is TRUE or **F** if it is FALSE.

- T F a) When the earth trembled under them one night, the man told the boy it was a train passing.
- T F b) The man turned away from the boy before coughing so the boy wouldn't see the blood he coughed into the snow.
- T F c) The man tried to take the last of the hot cocoa for himself.
- T F d) The boy had a bad dream about a wind-up toy robot that caught fire.
- T F e) Even though it was freezing cold, the man and the boy went swimming near a waterfall.
- T F f) The man never looked in the back of the trailer because he was afraid of what he would find.

2. Number the events from **1** to **6** in the order they occurred in the section.

- a) The man tells the boy stories of courage and justice from the old world.
- b) They camp in the cab of a truck.
- c) The man remembers people wearing masks and goggles squatting by the side of the road.
- d) The man and the boy cook and eat some mushrooms.
- e) The man tells the boy that they can't keep following the river.
- f) The man remembers trout swimming in a stream.



Section Two

(From the paragraph that starts with "Three nights later in the foothills..." to the paragraph that starts with "There was a skylight...")

Answer each question with a complete sentence.

1. Why did the man say the state roads would be there for a long time?

2. What did the man compare the Sun to?

3. What did the man and the boy eat with the last of their cocoa?

4. What did the man do when he and the boy found a good place to stop?

5. How did they get their car past the tractor-trailer?

6. How did the man see inside the trailer?

Journaling Prompt

The man's memories tell of societies that rose briefly in the first years after the disaster. They chanted, burned bonfires on ridges, and sacrificed other people. You are a member of one such society. Write a journal entry describing one of these ceremonies. Focus on the desperation of the people involved.



Section 1

One Perfect Day

The bleak atmosphere of the beginning of this story is broken by a recollection the man has of a perfect day from his childhood. It was a day spent in silence scavenging deadwood for use as firewood. Images of death are everywhere in the story and the man (then a boy) and his grandfather did not speak the whole time.

Recall a perfect day from your own childhood and write a journal entry describing it, as well as what made it a perfect day.



Sections 2 to 3

Nuclear Apocalypse

In this part of the story, we learn what happened to the world: a nuclear war wiped out all electronics and caused a nuclear winter. Because all electronics failed, there are no telephones, television, satellite GPS, internet, etc. Because of the nuclear winter, there are no crops and most of the animals on earth have died.

Is McCarthy's portrayal of the aftermath of a nuclear war accurate?

Research the latest thinking about what would happen to the world in the event of a nuclear war and write a report showing the ways in which the author of *The Road* got it right and where he may have got it wrong. Consider the following questions when doing your research:

- Would the war have to be global or would a regional nuclear war damage the whole planet?
- Are there enough nuclear weapons today to cause a nuclear winter?
- Could amateurs (as opposed to governments) make nuclear weapons well enough to cause the scale of devastation seen in the novel?



Word Search Puzzle

Find the following words from the story. The words are written horizontally, vertically, diagonally, and some are written backwards.

glaucoma	pampooties	envacuuuming	promontory	grommets
meconium	pipeplayed	creosote	hallooing	turnbuckles
port cochere	stakebed	firedrake	godspoke	hydroptic
patterans	canebrake	sappers	catamites	serrated

g	s	h	u	k	l	e	n	p	o	r	t	c	o	c	h	e	r	e	u
p	o	i	n	s	t	f	j	a	t	h	d	s	g	j	u	k	l	o	j
q	u	h	y	d	v	j	k	t	e	j	n	f	r	y	h	s	g	j	g
b	y	g	z	x	w	a	m	t	f	l	o	y	t	i	t	t	g	m	s
v	n	u	t	e	c	n	o	e	v	k	b	v	y	e	j	u	r	g	e
d	c	t	d	e	t	a	r	r	e	s	m	a	m	g	d	a	f	b	t
b	n	u	s	u	e	n	v	a	c	u	m	i	n	g	y	h	m	h	
n	m	p	o	a	x	n	u	n	p	o	v	a	g	y	j	l	o	j	
a	x	a	i	y	n	s	b	s	d	s	t	a	k	e	b	e	d	m	
y	h	m	r	p	n	m	y	e	g	l	a	u	c	o	m	a	d	a	p
j	r	p	o	r	e	k	s	f	e	f	p	r	f	r	e	u	d	d	l
a	w	o	m	y	j	c	a	r	v	p	n	d	y	c	y	f	e	o	
c	e	o	t	k	g	a	l	c	v	x	e	b	h	n	o	g	v	h	k
n	e	t	n	n	o	t	s	a	h	s	r	u	n	r	n	v	g	y	u
u	g	i	v	l	o	a	a	n	y	a	s	c	m	y	i	n	t	b	t
l	l	e	e	u	t	m	y	e	d	e	l	k	r	h	u	k	y	d	u
o	i	s	s	l	g	i	o	b	r	t	d	l	u	e	m	i	u	s	j
y	n	t	y	w	a	f	b	r	o	s	e	e	o	k	o	r	i	e	r
h	t	r	v	a	e	e	l	a	p	y	r	s	e	o	d	s	o	g	g
r	e	d	f	b	d	s	o	k	t	h	t	f	d	p	i	u	o	b	y
f	i	r	e	d	r	a	k	e	i	y	f	r	e	s	d	n	i	t	i
a	s	f	d	y	n	h	u	h	c	f	w	w	t	d	e	t	g	x	e
f	u	j	m	n	g	r	w	a	r	d	e	h	y	o	g	u	g	r	s
k	l	u	t	g	v	a	s	z	v	a	d	y	h	g	b	j	y	g	c



Comprehension Quiz

Answer each question in a complete sentence.

1. What did the man say of the child in the first scene?

2. What did the child paint on his facemask with crayons?

3. What was peculiar about the hearth in the man's childhood home?

4. Why didn't the man want to stay by the waterfall?

5. Besides the distress to the boy, what did the father regret most about shooting the bad man?

6. What familiar scene did the man find in the remains of an orchard?

7. What did the boy see in the abandoned town that he wanted to see again?

SUBTOTAL: /14

Themes

Discuss the themes of the novel, especially why they are so relevant given the novel's setting.

Survival in a time of critical scarcity of resources as well as the absence of any external enforcement of order.

The Golden Rule: The differences between father and son regarding kindness to others; "doing good" as a point of tension.

Integrity and survival: Telling the truth, never breaking promises. These are principles that the father teaches the son, but do they matter anymore?

Religion and Faith in the new reality: neither the father nor his son have any doubt of the existence of God. The opposite seems to be the rule for the other survivors in the story.

Other Theme(s)?

NAME: _____

After You Read 



Section Three

(From the paragraph that starts with "They camped that night in the woods..." to the paragraph that starts with "In the morning they came up out of the ravine....")

Answer each question with a complete sentence.

1. What clue(s) does the author give to the nature of the disaster that destroyed the world? What do the clues indicate?

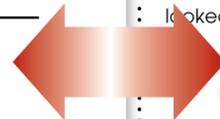
2. When the man's wife leaves, she tells him she'd do what if it weren't for him? What does this indicate about the conditions of this world?

3. Why did the man say he would shoot the bad man?

4. When did the man and the boy stop running after the bad man was killed?

5. What happened to the body of the bad man? What does this say about the food shortage?

6. Why did the man almost lose his temper with the boy?



EASY MARKING



Journaling Prompt

Imagine that you are part of a gang of people that had survived the years since the disaster. Write a journal entry in which you and one other person from this group go hunting for people to eat.

<p>1. The stopping of all the clocks and the power going out hints at an electromagnetic pulse and that indicates nuclear bombs going off. (Other clues: the flashes of light, glowing in the distance and burning cities.)</p>	<p>1. Answers will vary.</p>	<p>1. a) glassed</p>	 <p>1. The first indication that there might be people in the town is a wisp of smoke that the boy spots with the binoculars.</p>
<p>2. The man's wife tells him she would kill their son before she took her own life.</p>	<p>2. Answers will vary.</p>	<p>b) danced</p>	<p>2. The blanket was in a house covering a body lying in a bed.</p>
<p>3. The man said he would shoot the bad man if he looked at the boy again.</p>	<p>Vocabulary</p>	<p>c) ratty</p>	<p>3. The man had no idea what the people in the town were eating.</p>
<p>4. The man and the boy only stopped running when the boy fell and would not get up again.</p>	<p>1. lanyards</p> <p>2. floundered</p> <p>3. sideboard</p>	<p>d) tinder</p> <p>e) cedar</p>	<p>4. The boy was distressed because he was afraid the other boy was all alone with no one to look after him.</p>
<p>5. The bad man's companions cooked and ate him.</p>	<p>4. supplementary</p> <p>5. phalanx</p>	<p>2. a) abreast</p> <p>b) matrix</p> <p>c) gait</p>	<p>5. The man saw a field where people had been butchered and a wall with severed heads and skulls lining it.</p>
<p>6. The man almost lost his temper with the boy because he thought the boy wasn't answering his question.</p>	<p>6. junction</p> <p>7. kerfs</p> <p>8. tasseled</p>	<p>d) cornmeal</p> <p>e) hillocks</p>	<p>6. The man heard sounds of trees falling because of the weight of snow on them and they had to run to get out of the grove.</p>
<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>

The Road

- **RSL.9-10.1** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- **RSL.9-10.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
- **RSL.9-10.3** Analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
- **RSL.9-10.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.
- **RSL.9-10.7** Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.
- **RSL.9-10.10** By the end of grade 9 read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- **RSL.11-12.1** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- **RSL.11-12.2** Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
- **RSL.11-12.3** Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama.
- **RSL.11-12.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.
- **RSL.11-12.7** Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem, evaluating how each version interprets the source text.
- **RSL.11-12.10** By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- **WS.9-10.1** Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- **WS.9-10.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- **WS.9-10.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences..
- **WS.9-10.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **WS.9-10.7** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- **WS.9-10.8** Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- **WS.9-10.9** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
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